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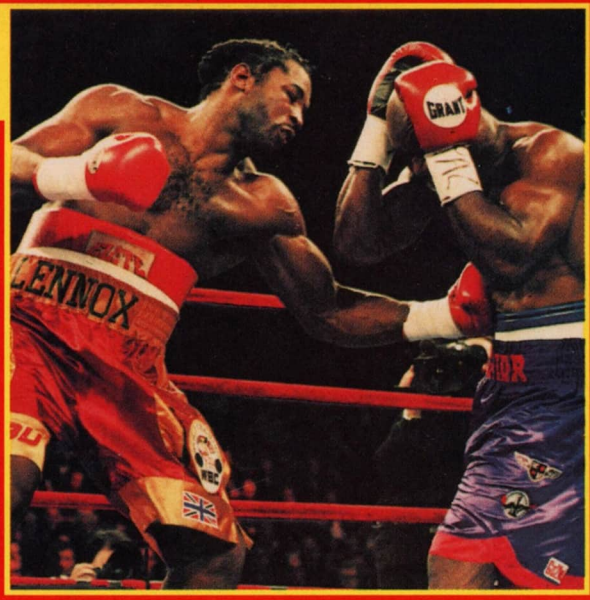
KING OF ALL RIPOFFS!

Who's To Blame For The Lewis-Holyfield Disaster?



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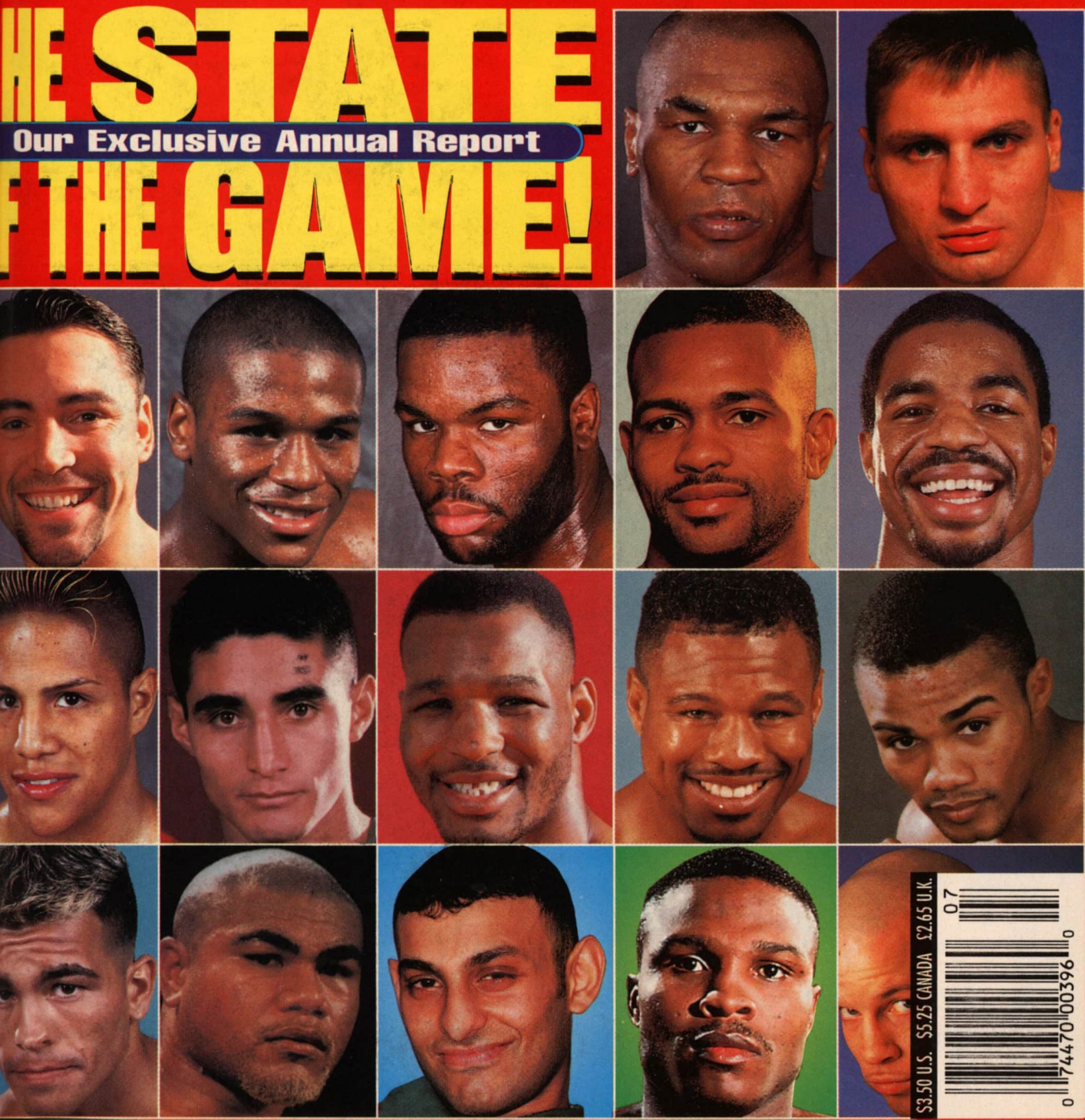
JULY 1999

HE STATE F THE GAME!

Our Exclusive Annual Report



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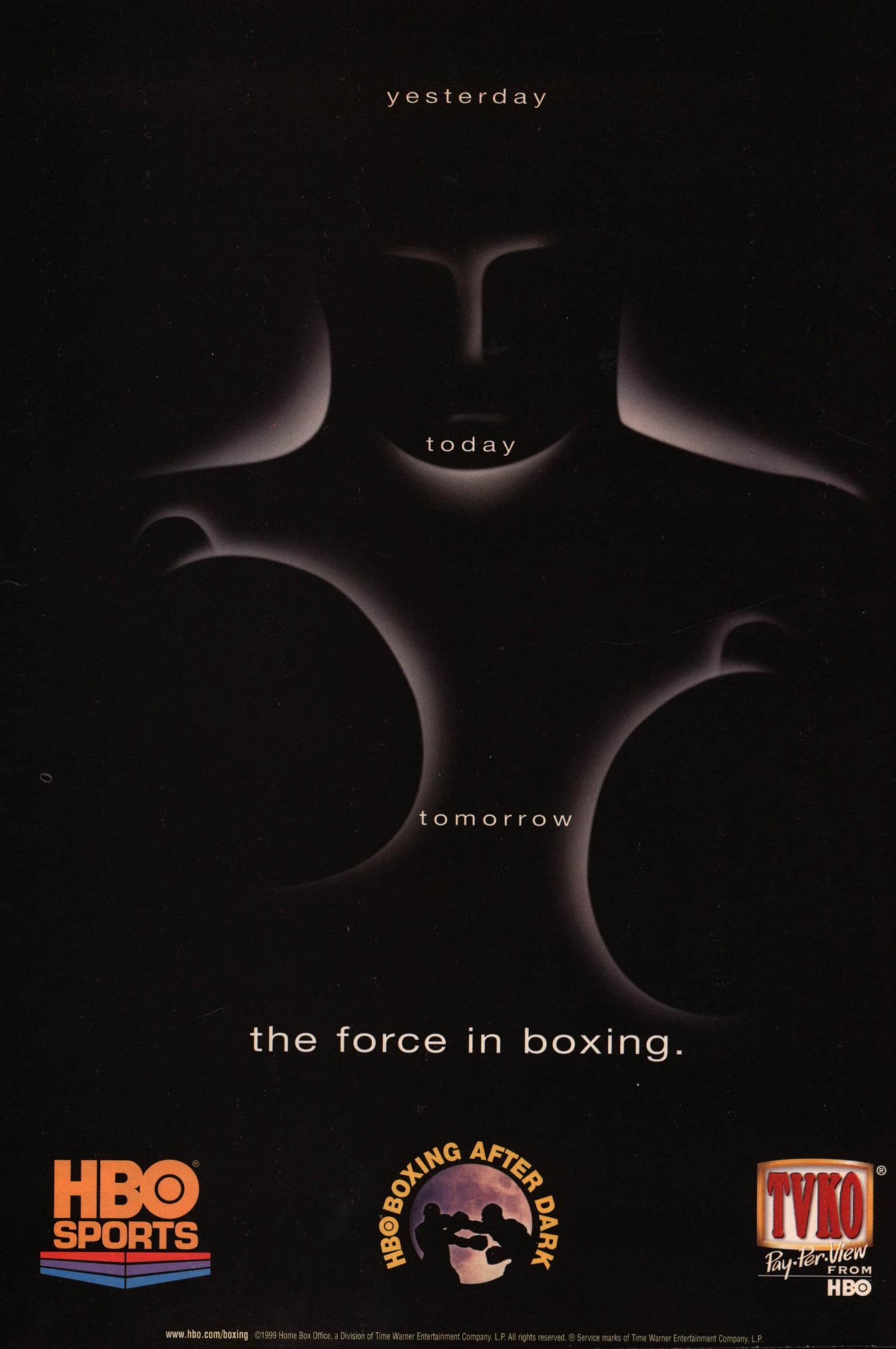

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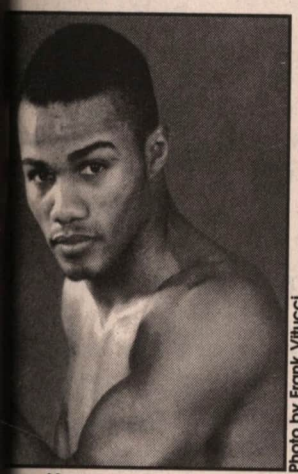

Photo by Frank Vitucci

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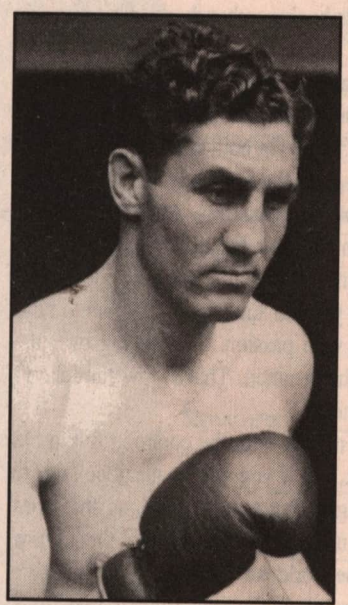

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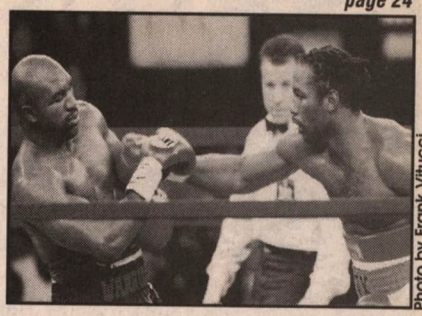

Photo by Frank Vitucci

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Cover Design by Joseph Kalman

RINGSIDE

Welcome, Lennox Lewis, welcome to the ranks of genuine heavyweight champions. By any standard, any criterion, you have won the right to consider yourself the best heavyweight in the world. True, you were already a two-time WBC champ before fighting Evander Holyfield, but you'd never beaten a legend before, and besides, the bout with Holyfield was for all the belts, the undisputed heavyweight championship of the world. What was done to you was unforgivable, but if possible, forget for a moment that you were cheated out of the victory. That's not the most important thing. The fact of the matter is that you beat Holyfield, beat him convincingly. Everybody knows that by now—even Jean Williams and Larry O'Connell.

While nobody can ever give you back the moment of glory that was so cruelly stolen from you at Madison Square Garden, there's another way of looking at what happened: If you had received the decision you unquestionably deserved, a lot more attention would have been focused on the aesthetic quality of your performance. Critics would be harping about how you failed to finish off a shot fighter, failed to provide the kind of rip-snorting action fans crave from their heavyweight champ. And you know what? They'd have a point. But thanks to O'Connell, Williams—and perhaps others—the disgraceful verdict and its ramifications are in the spotlight. It's up to you to take full advantage of this moment to shine.

Lennox, you weren't the only victim at the Garden on March 13; the sport of boxing took it pretty hard, too. And while you may not be feeling particularly charitable toward the Sweet Science right now—and that's certainly understandable—now is the time the sport needs you the most. The best relief for what ails boxing, other than a deodorizer, is a strong, charismatic heavyweight champion.

If you want to fill that role, certain things will have to change. Sure, being who you are got you this far, but to share in the same sort of public adoration that was afforded all the great heavyweight champions, you've got to give more. On both sides of the ropes.

The most important lesson you should take away from the first Holyfield fight is that playing it safe can lead to just as big of a disaster as being reckless. And that's not all. Jabbing your way to victory might be good enough for your English fans, but here in America, where most of your purse money is generated, that's not going to cut it. Nobody expects you to blow out everybody the way you did Andrew Golota, but to raise passionate support for your cause, you must fight with passion. Stop crying over the shafting you got, and simply starch Holyfield in the rematch. That's how the heavyweight champion of the world is supposed to settle things.

You also have to loosen up outside of the ring, mingle with the common folk a bit. The remote, laid-back approach isn't going to work, not if you want your popularity to keep pace with your accomplishments. I'm not suggesting you do anything that goes against your nature. Be yourself, but share that self more with the public, let them know who you are. Being the heavyweight champion of the world isn't a nine-to-five job; it's a larger-than-life, around-the-clock job for as long as you hold the title. Enjoy it, revel in it, be the heavyweight champion boxing needs—now more than ever.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 78, No. 7 July 199

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CUSTOMER SERVICE
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9
Marion, OH 43302

The Ring (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 78, No. 7, is published monthly, with an additional issue in December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: The Ring, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43302. Single copy price $3.50 ($5.25 in Canada, £2.65 in U.K.). Subscription price $32.45 in the U.S., $42.85 Canada and remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

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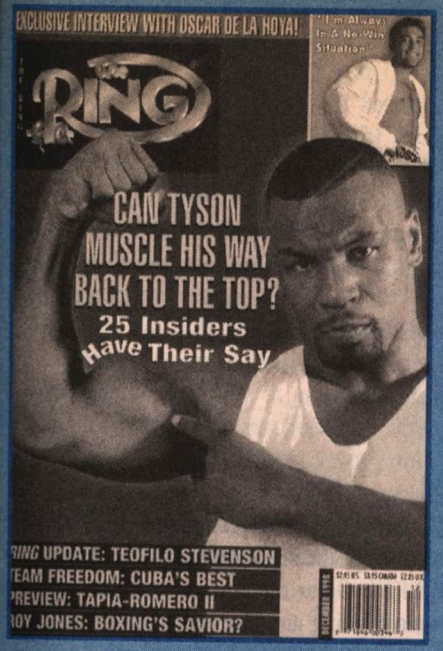
Printed in U.S.A.



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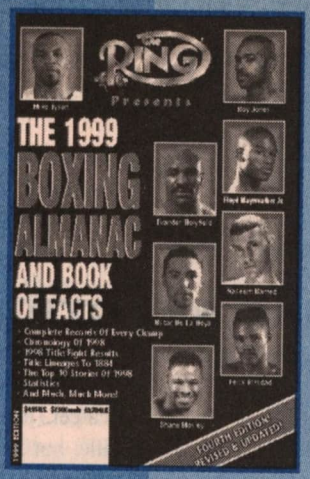

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COME OUT WRITING

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OSCAR-IKE REACTION

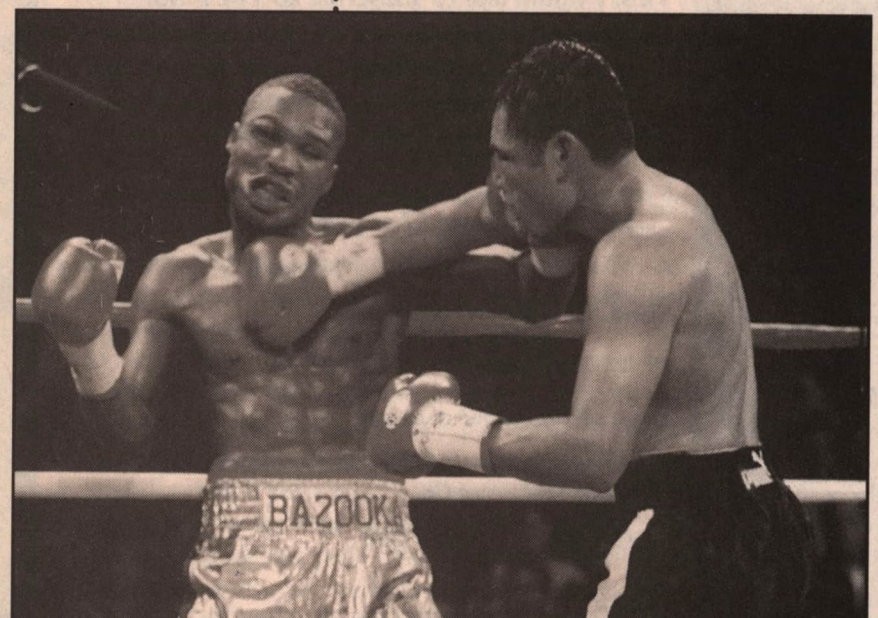
Congratulations should go to Oscar De La Hoya for his gutsy effort against Ike Quartey. In th first half of the final round, De La Hoya walked right through the supposedly stronger Quartey t give him the biggest shellacking of his career. It turned out Oscar didn't need that dominant las round to retain his WBC welterweight title, but he wasn't taking any chances. Well done, Oscar You're the man.

As for Ike Quartey, he has no one to blame for his defeat but himself and his handlers. In th later rounds, the attitude seemed to be he was so far in front, that all he had to do was finish on hi feet to win the fight. In fact, before that final round, Quartey's trainer told him to "just control th round," displaying little urgency. I had Quartey in front going into that incredible final round, bu most of the rounds that I gave him were hardly decisive.

A message to all future De La Hoy opponents: Don't try to outslick "Th Golden Boy" over the 12-round distanc and expect to get the decision. The onl way to beat this kid is to fight every roun hard, much like Aaron Pryor did agains Alexis Arguello in their two classi encounters.

Is there anybody on the horizon that i up for the job? I have my doubts.

JOHN MANIA
Victoria, Australi



The Oscar De La Hoya-Ike Quartey bout drew varied responses. Reader John Manias thought De La Hoya proved he is the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world today, while reader Michael Hegan thought De La Hoya got the decision because of his marketing appeal and flashy image.

I just caught the rebroadcast of Oscar De La Hoya's defense of the WBC welterweight title against Ike Quartey. I have concluded that the decision De La Hoya was fortunate enough to receive had more to do with image and marketing than who was the best fighter.

Only the knowledgeable, hardcore boxing fan knows who Quartey is. If Quartey was given the nod he so richly deserved, "The Golden Boy" and, of course, those who have their cans tied to him, would lose some money. On the first real test little Oscar faced (not counting the bout he nearly lost to Pernell Whitaker), he lost the fight and won the decision.

MICHAEL HEGAN
Regina, Saskatchewan

I was really annoyed by HBO commentator Jim Lampley trying to compare the Oscar De La Hoya fight with Ike Quartey to the first fight between Sugar Ray Leonard and Thomas Hearns. First of all, Leonard and Hearns fought a world unification bout. Both Leonard and Hearns cleaned out the welterweight division. Leonard beat Wilfred Benitez and the menacing Roberto Duran, while Hearns annihilated a dangerous Pipino Cuevas within two rounds.

There was no doubt that Leonard and Hearns were the two best boxers in the welterweight division at the time. We still don't know who is presently the best welterweight, because there has not been a unification bout.

So, Jim, when De La Hoya, Felix Trinidad, Quartey, and James Page finally decide to fight each other, maybe then you can compare any of their fights with that great welterweight showdown between Leonard and Hearns.

GENE KELLY JR.
Moreno Valley, CA

IS THE PEA STILL SWEET?

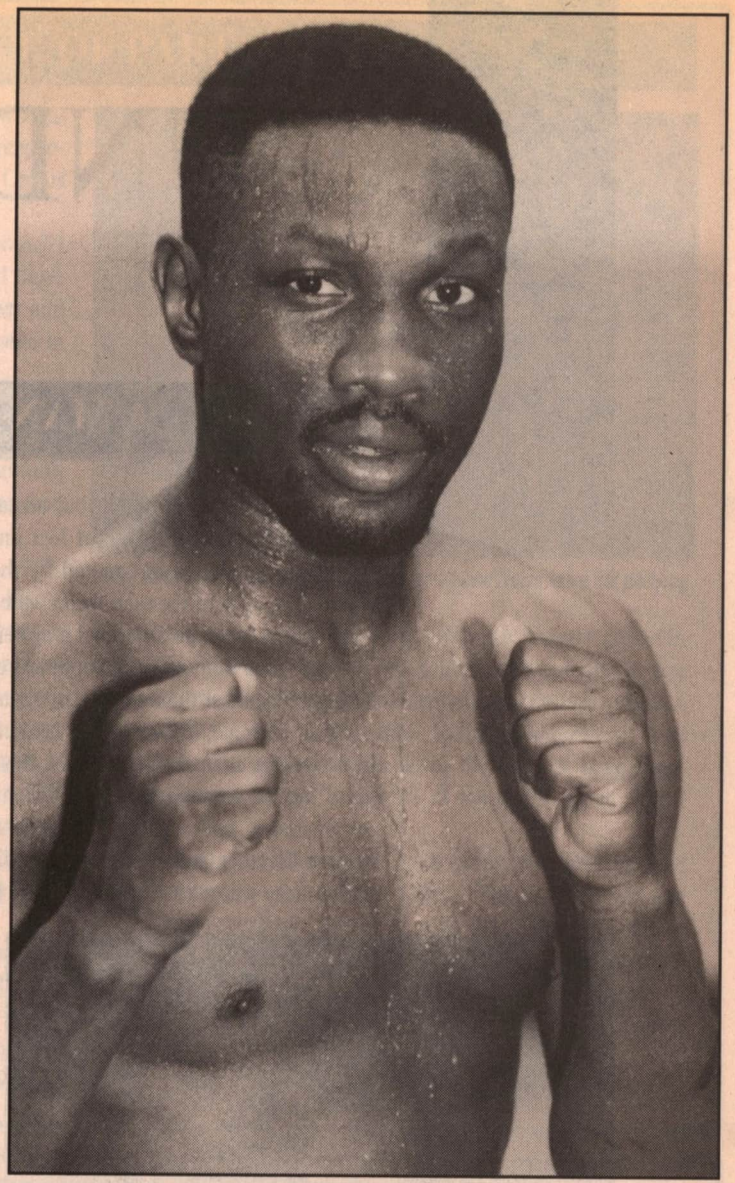
I'm writing in reference to the ongoing dispute of the controversial decision losses incurred by Pernell "Sweet Pea" Whitaker through the years. Like Max Kellerman from ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*, I feel that up until that fight against Felix Trinidad, Whitaker hadn't really lost a fight, but rather suffered through some bad decisions. I believe he had beaten Oscar De La Hoya, but was without a doubt outboxed and outclassed by "Tito." Whitaker was so rattled that he couldn't believe that he lost. All I can say is make way for Trinidad, Oscar!

JAMES HAUDOUGLAS
Palm Coast, FL

I'd like to thank Pernell Whitaker for a long championship run after his gritty try for Felix Trinidad's IBF welterweight title. I'm also glad he passed his drug test this time out. Although he was knocked around for 12 rounds, he taught "Tito" a few tricks along the way.

Whitaker says he's not retiring after whining about getting no respect. I respect him as only one of two true great lightweight champs of the last 30 years (the other is Roberto Duran). I know if he decides to keep going, he has more than enough to take James Page's WBA belt. I'd like to see "Sweet Pea" give Ike Quartey a good boxing lesson also. Quartey would be so totally befuddled trying to hit Whitaker, he'd quit from exhaustion after 10 rounds. Quartey showed he can't go 12 rounds strong. I hope whatever he does, Pernell can stop living in denial about his personal problems and his in-ring losses, and should remember he was given two gift wins against Wilfredo Rivera. Whatever he chooses to do, I wish him luck, hope that he remains healthy, and pray he put a lot of money away for his retirement.

ROCKY SEITZ
Pensacola, FL



Though Pernell Whitaker lost to Felix Trinidad in February—the first decisive loss of "Sweet Pea's" career—he would still be able to defeat Ike Quartey or WBA welter champ James Page, suggests reader Rocky Seitz.

MERCHANT OF MENACE

I have been a reader of THE RING for over 20 years and never had any reason to write in to disagree with anything you print (despite Jeff Ryan)—that is, until your March '99 issue.

Was it necessary to print Larry Merchant's letter condemning Charles "Sonny" Liston? It's bad enough I have to listen to Merchant's self-righteous tirades while watching HBO fights. Now I have to read his opinions in my favorite fight mag?

Mr. Merchant claims Liston is overrated by THE RING, but I feel you guys overrate Merchant by printing his letter above the rest. Of course, Liston was not a good role model, but what this pompous windbag Merchant does not seem to realize is that the reason he has a high paying job is because of the fighters, not the other way around. Yes, Larry, that includes Liston, even if he has been dead for nearly 30 years.

ARTHUR MEDINA
Corpus Christi, TX ■

ROUND ONE

A MAN OF THE PEOPLE

Muhammad Ali stood tall but unsteadily, a wall of silence surrounding his still handsome features, and those once graceful feet unsure of their next step. Slowly he made his way onto the Brixton pavement to be greeted by the adulation, the awe, the love that still oozes from an Ali crowd. The eyes of the man theirs were trained on were less animated, set in the stony face still recognizable as when he described it as being "the most populous face on earth."

There is an almost imperceptible tremor to it now, but the poignancy of this yielded with shuddering suddenness the moment the chant went up.

"Ali, bomaye," boomed the heaving crowd of old and young as the three-time former world heavyweight champion conducted them like an orchestra. The translation, of course, is "Ali, kill him," but the words mean much, much more. They are the words yelled with a fervor that bordered on fanaticism under African skies on an October night in 1974 when Ali, to the astonishment of George Foreman and a watching world, resurrected himself as a fighter. Ali's appearance in London in February was a kind of rebirth, too. For from the moment he lit the Olympic flame in Atlanta, he has made the ultimate comeback into the world's consciousness, reminding people that he is still real, not merely a heroic memory.

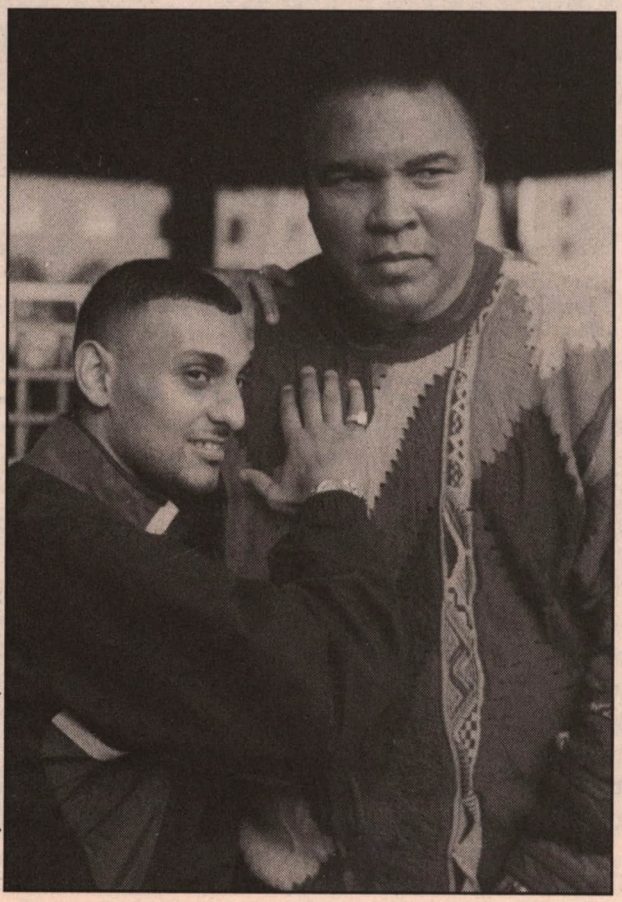


Photo by Richard Hanson/Jubilee 2000

Hamed gets a chance to meet his idol, Ali

"This is what keeps him alive, what keeps him smiling," said Howard Bingham, his best friend of almost 40 years and, as always, by his side in London. "Ali and people. He loves people. He feeds on the joy he sees in their eyes. Ali is and always has been a man of the people."

Ali was in London in his capacity as international ambassador for Jubilee 2000, a movement set up to campaign for the cancellation of Third World debt. He laid a wreath at Westminster, linking hands with six children to represent the seven million lives that could be saved by switching debt payments to health care, and was driven through the streets of Brixton in a 1930s Bentley. He also attended the Brit Awards—Britain's annual celebration ceremony for the pop music industry—the previous evening, where he was introduced to, among others, featherweight phenom Naseem Hamed. Many in the celebrating audience were awestruck and moved to tears when he was presented with the Freddie Mercury Award by U2 lead singer Bono.

"Nothing is more important to the poorest nations of Africa and Latin America," Ali said, "than to be able to keep most of what they earn and invest it in their people and the well-being of their children. Only ordinary people around the world can fight for justice and freedom. I'm leaving the fight now to the younger generation."

—Brian Doogan

THE PRICE OF PARTYING

Mando Ramos was recently recalling when he and Raul Rojas, his stablemate and idol, were training for their respective lightweight and featherweight title fights against Carlos "Teo" Cruz and Shozo Saijyo on September 28, 1968.

"One day, Raul said, 'Hey, let's go play some pool.' I was 19, he was 24 or 25. We went to this place and all these people recognized us and came around us. I had one beer and blacked out, and I woke up next to some lady I never seen in my life. And Raul was passed out in the car.

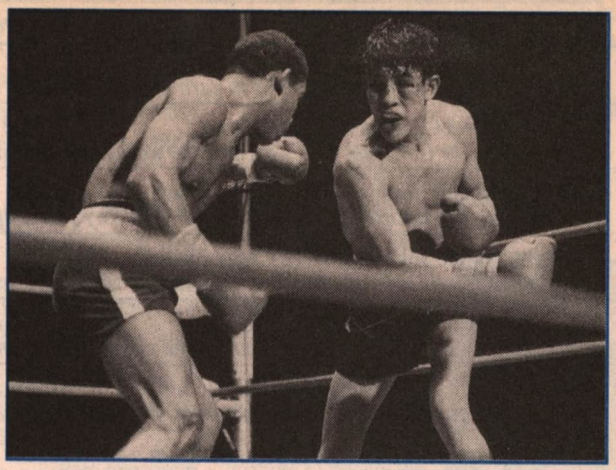
"'Jesus, we're supposed to run,' I said. When we got back to camp, everybody was gone. [Trainer] Jackie McCoy went running with the sparring partners. They were out running while the two champs were getting drunk somewhere. And we both lost our fights."

But Ramos beat Cruz in a rematch on February 18, 1969, becoming the youngest 135-pound world champion in history, a feat celebrated almost 30 years to the day later at a meeting of the Golden State Boxers Association in Los Angeles. Also celebrated were Ramos' last 16 years of sobriety and his efforts through his foundation called Boxers Against Alcohol and Drugs (BAAD) to get kids out of gangs.

In contrast, Rojas, now wasted away to under 100 pounds, was in a convalescent home, being fed intravenously. "He'll break your heart," said Ramos. "He can't hardly walk. He has no insurance, no medical plan. He hasn't worked in 20 years. He's been panhandling winos."

The plight of his old friend, once the WBA featherweight champion, illustrates the need for a boxers' union, Ramos said. It's another cause close to his heart.

"I had nothing when I was through boxing, but because I had joined the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in 1969, I still had a job. Boxers got nothing, while baseball, football, basketball, and everybody else has a union. People who come around boxers are ruthless. They're in the ring getting their brains splattered all over their head, and promoters are using them up. It keeps happening because kids are looking at the quick green, like I did."



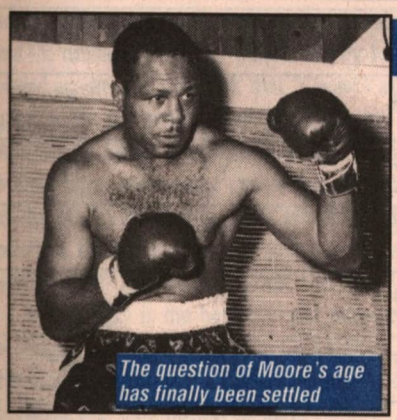
Badly swollen Ramos lost to Cruz because he and Rojas were out partying

One thing he does recall with pride was getting THE RING's championship belt in 1969. "That's my pride and joy," Ramos recalled. "I grew up with RING magazine, and to have that belt was my whole life." He's not as effusive about another belt he got in 1971, after winning an alphabet title.

"The WBC belt I won? It can't cost 200 bucks," Ramos said.

—Pete Ehrmann

THE SLIGHTLY-LESS-OLD MONGOOSE



The question of Moore's age has finally been settled

The debate rages no more. The ongoing question of whether former light heavyweight king Archie Moore was born on December 13, 1913, in Benoit, Mississippi, as his mother said, or on December 13, 1916, in Collinsville, Illinois, as he claimed, has been answered by longtime boxing fan John Buchanan of Lumberton, Texas. In a letter Buchanan sent to former RING managing editor Phill Marder, now a record-keeper with Fight Fax Inc., he explained how he discovered that "The Old Mongoose," who died last December, was right about his age all along.

"I figured the best way to ascertain his correct birth date was to find him in the 1920 Federal census," Buchanan wrote. "I searched for him in both the Mississippi and Illinois censuses for 1920 without success. Finally, in a biography of Archie I learned that he and his sister, Rachel, were raised by their Uncle Cleve and Aunt Willie Pearl in St. Louis. Sure enough, there he was: 'Archie L. Wright,' in the household of Cleveland and Willie Moore (probably where he got his fighting name)."

The census lists Moore's age as $3^2/_{12}$ years as of January 1920, making the 1916 date accurate. This means Moore was 19 when he turned pro, 36 when he captured the light heavy title from Joey Maxim, 38 when he challenged Rocky Marciano for the heavyweight belt, 44 when he made his last 175-pound title defense, 46 when he retired, and five days short of his 82nd birthday when he died. The census didn't prove Moore right on all counts, however; it lists his birthplace as Mississippi, not Illinois.

—Eric Raskin

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
2-20-99	Paulie Ayala W 10 David Vasquez	Uni	b	C+	C-	C
Ayala will need to do better than this to earn second title shot						
2-26-99	Israel Cardona KO 7 Joel Perez	ESPN2	l	B+	B+	B
Excellent win for Cardona, who's become the world's third best lightweight						
2-27-99	**Reggie Johnson W 12 Will Taylor**	**HBO**	**IBF lh**	**A-**	**C-**	**B-**
Good tuneup for Johnson; unification fight with Roy Jones up next						
2-27-99	**Stevie Johnston W 12 Cesar Bazan**	**HBO**	**WBC l**	**A+**	**A**	**A-**
If Johnston fought this way the first time, maybe we'd have seen him against Mosley by now						
2-27-99	Adan Vargas KO 5 Luis Rolon	Telemundo	b	B+	C+	B-
If you'd like to see Vargas against Paulie Ayala, you're not alone						
2-27-99	Michael Carbajal KO 6 Jose De Jesus	Telemundo	jb	C+	D+	C+
The over/under on Carbajal's retirement was six months; if you went with the over, you win						
3-6-99	Lou Savarese W 10 Mount Whitaker	HBO	h	B-	A-	B+
Savarese grits his teeth and grinds out win in good, tough scrap						
3-6-99	**David Reid W 12 Laurent Boudouani**	**HBO**	**WBA jm**	**A**	**B+**	**C+**
Reid dethrones decent fighter in Frenchman, but somehow we expected more						
3-6-99	Daniel Santos KO 2 Ray Lovato	Uni	w	C+	C-	C
Santos crushes Lovato in mismatch; when did Lovato get so awful?						
3-7-99	Wolfgramm W 10 Gerard Jones	FOXSN	h	C-	D	C-
Wolfgramm TKOs TV camera, but can't put away the less mobile Jones						
3-7-99	James Toney KO 8 Terry Porter	FOXSN	h	D	D	C-
Toney weighed 203; if you missed it, be thankful						
3-8-99	Tito Mendoza KO 5 Dwain Williams	FOXSN	jm	C+	A-	B+
Mendoza prevails in shootout of hard-hitting prospects						
3-12-99	Danell Nicholson W 10 Frankie Swindell	ESPN2	h	D+	D-	D
Nicholson overtakes Tony Tubbs on list of all-time bland heavyweights						
3-12-99	Hasim Rahman KO 5 Michael Rush	ESPN2	h	B-	D	C+
"The Rock" looks solid in first fight since controversial loss to Tua						
3-13-99	John Ruiz KO 4 Mario Cawley	PPV	h	C+	D-	C-
If Ruiz would fight someone decent, maybe we'd find out if he's any good						
3-13-99	**Fernando Vargas KO 4 Howard Clarke**	**PPV**	**IBF jm**	**A-**	**D+**	**B-**
Vargas may have what it takes to keep Oscar De La Hoya at welterweight						
3-13-99	**James Page W 12 Sam Garr**	**PPV**	**WBA w**	**A-**	**C+**	**B+**
Page may not be the best 147-pounder, but he sure is fun to watch						
3-13-99	**Lennox Lewis D 12 Evander Holyfield**	**PPV**	**Unified h**	**A+**	**A-**	**C**
The last time we saw a verdict this bad, a guy named Lance Ito was the referee						
3-14-99	Joel Casamayor W 10 Russell Jones	FOXSN	jl	C+	C-	C
Casamayor in shutout; not his best outing, but a lopsided win						
3-19-99	Bryant Brannon W 12 Demetrius Jenkins	ESPN2	sm	B-	B+	D+
We liked Brannon better when he slugged more and ran less; this was a bore						
3-20-99	Kirk Johnson W 10 Al Cole	HBO	h	B+	A-	B-
How is it that Cole weighs 230 pounds now and still can't punch?						
3-20-99	Ike Ibeabuchi KO 5 Chris Byrd	HBO	h	A-	A+	B+
What was all that about Michael Grant being the best of the young heavyweights?						
3-20-99	John-John Molina KO 7 Ruben Nevarez	Telemundo	l	C+	C+	C
Molina may not be a top fighter anymore, but he can still beat the second-tier guys						
3-23-99	Edgar Ruiz Tech. Win 9 Willy Wise	FOXSN	w	B-	B+	B+
Headbutt brings premature end to entertaining scrap; rematch likely						

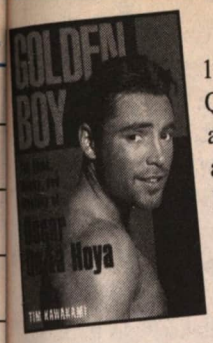
Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN–Fox SportsNet; Uni–Univision

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF



While his stirring 12th round against Ike Quartey apparently answered questions about his fighting heart, there are even more troubling questions about boxing's biggest celebrity raised in *Golden Boy: The Fame, Money, And Mystery Of Oscar De La Hoya* (Andrews McMeel Publishing, $19.95, 315 pages). They concern the maturity, emotional stability, and psyche of the mega-boxer author Tim Kawakami calls "a Latino Lancelot dressed in Italian suits and $400 shoes."

While *Los Angeles Times* reporter Kawakami is openly and properly respectful of the ring prowess displayed and the laurels garnered by De La Hoya since he was a six-year-old prodigy, he also candidly reviews and details the character issues that have caused the 1992 Olympic gold medalist and current WBC welterweight champion to be viewed by many as a callow, shallow, over-marketed object of derision headed for and deserving of a big fall.

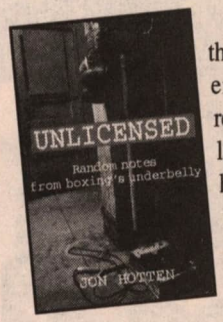
There are the musical trainers, of course (De La Hoya had three by the time he was 15), the musical women (when out in public with then-fiancee Veronica Perault, "The Golden Boy" would tell other females she was his cousin and get their phone numbers), and the problem shrewdly pinpointed by his ousted conditioner's remark that "Oscar's as good as the last person that talks to him." And there is De La Hoya after the John-John Molina fight, seeing that golden mug, with all its Madison Avenue and Hollywood potential, bruised for the first time. "Nobody will love me!" he moaned. "Look, I'm ugly."

What's ugly is the behavior and attitude of some of the people closest to De La Hoya. His family and trainer Robert Alcazar won't be happy with their portrayals here.

But this is no *National Enquirer* job. Kawakami's treatment of De La Hoya's fights and opponents is first-rate, and it's all absorbing reading even though the narrative is sometimes disjointed and a trifle overdone (e.g., "Oscar would listen to whoever was talking to him, and loyalty was something that did not seem to emanate from his soul"). Kawakami has been covering boxing for only the last four years, which may account for his off-base description of former lightweight champion Carlos Ortiz (once briefly De La Hoya's trainer) as "a slugger, a typical Latino brawler."

The Quartey fight indicated that Oscar the boxer is maturing. This excellent first biography shows that outside the ring, he needs to catch up, and to find and keep someone in his life whose concern isn't dictated by De La Hoya's earning power. He'll be lucky, too, if future bios are as well-intentioned and objective as this one.

—Pete Ehrmann



In jolly old England, the birthplace of modern pugilism, there remains a brand of outlaw boxing that somehow survives despite media scorn and the longtime popularity of the legitimate game. This world of unlicensed "backroom jobs" is explored in Jon Hotten's first book, *Unlicensed: Random Notes From Boxing's Underbelly* (Mainstream Publishing, 191 pages, paperback).

Hotten's prose style seems more suited to pulp fiction than investigative reporting, and there are times when you can't help but wonder how much of what you're reading is true. Sources in England, however, tell me that the unlicensed game does indeed still exist, though its popularity is spotty at best.

One also has to wonder how careful Hotten was in getting his facts straight. In one scene, a "shotgun poked through the open window." In the next paragraph, a "rifle" is fired. If Hotten doesn't know the difference between a shotgun and a rifle, you have to question how careful he was about the rest of the book's details. Still, the author names names, including purported legends of the unlicensed game Roy Shaw, Billy "The Galway Bull" Heany, and Lenny McClean—and gives graphic, detailed accounts of their exploits.

The best part of *Unlicensed* is the human face Hotten gives the men who compete in these nefarious and often sickening contests. Like their licensed brethren, they bleed, hurt, and ride the emotional rollercoaster that accompanies victory and defeat.

—Nigel Collins

With the 1900s coming to a close and sports century retrospectives springing up all over the place, David Rayvern Allen's *Punches On The Page* (Mainstream Publishing, 208 pages, $29.95 hardcover) presents a unique manner to review the professional boxing world's past 100 years or so. Starting with an interview with John L. Sullivan from 1889 and continuing up through an article on Naseem Hamed written in 1997, the book is a compilation of 26 of the finest pieces written about the fight game during that time span, and it renders a varied and effective picture of boxing through the decades. Though the American reader may feel *Punches* is slanted a bit toward the British scene, its breadth of topics captures a thorough enough scope to satisfy most.

The list of well-known authors is impressive—Jack London, George Bernard Shaw, and A.J. Liebling are among those whose work graces the pages—but some of the best pieces are those penned by the fighters. Jim Corbett's description of how he confidently took apart Sullivan is fascinating, as is the excerpt from the book *A Man Must Fight* in which Gene Tunney recalls his victory over Jack Dempsey in "The Battle Of The Long Count." The writing in selections from the autobiographies of Rocky Graziano and Jake LaMotta are far less refined (just like the fighters in question), but are nonetheless entertaining and enlightening reads.

Many of the biggest bouts since the Queensbury rules were installed—Johnson vs. Jeffries, Dempsey vs. Firpo, Louis vs. Schmeling II, and even the offbeat Ali vs. Marciano computer bout—are examined, and it is subject matter like this that makes great writing so easy. But Allen should be given credit for culling the right prose to make his book both significant and enjoyable to read.

—Eric Raskin

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Morales: Three-year deal

Just when **Ricardo Lopez'** career was getting interesting, it may be coming to an end. The undefeated WBC/WBA 105-pound champion underwent surgery on his right eyelid in Mexico City in February, and won't be able to fight until at least June. He says he expects to retire at the end of '99, possibly after just two more fights … Also talking retirement is recently dethroned WBA super flyweight champ **Satoshi Iida**, who announced in late-February that he was calling it quits. The twice-beaten Japanese southpaw dislocated his right shoulder in his last bout against **Jesus Rojas** and, at 29, plans to pursue a career as an actor … Unbeaten WBC super feather champ **Erik Morales** signed a three-year promotional contract with Top Rank in early-March. "He will be one of the greatest of all-time," said Top Rank President **Bob Arum** … Two of boxing fans' biggest pet peeves, the overabundance of titles and the tendency of fighters to stick around way too long, may now be coming together to form one monstrous disaster. Chapel Hill, North Carolina, attorney **Rick Snider** revealed plans in February for "Legends Of Boxing," sort of a pugilistic seniors' tour. The International Boxing Council (IBC) is sanctioning the over-40 division, billing it as being for "mature fighters who have held, or fought for, a sanctioned world championship title." **James "Bonecrusher" Smith**, 45, the only heavyweight champion with a college degree, apparently came up with the idea. Way to put that education to good use … Former heavyweight champion **Trevor Berbick** is fighting deportation from Canada to his native Jamaica after being stripped of his Canadian landed immigrant status for a series of criminal convictions. Between 1991 and '92, Berbick was convicted of rape, second-degree grand theft, and misdemeanor assault … Congratulations to former lightweight champ **Sean O'Grady** on finding that there is life after *Tuesday Night Fights*. "The Champ" is the new director of public relations/special promotions for the Miccosukee Resort and Convention Center in Miami, Florida … HBO's outstanding ratings for boxing continue to roll in, as the **Felix Trinidad-Pernell Whitaker** fight garnered a 16.5 rating, HBO's highest-rated live boxing match since **George Foreman** vs. **Axel Schulz** in 1995. Two weeks later HBO *World Championship Boxing* extended its streak of consecutive double-digit ratings to 12 with a 10.3 rating for **David Reid** vs. **Laurent Boudouani** … **Morris "Mike" Scionti**, the head of the Florida State Athletic Commission, was fired in early-March for accepting a $100,000 "gift" from **Don King** and then trying to influence the rest of the regulatory board to help the controversial promoter. **Governor Jeb Bush** removed Scionti after it was determined that there was a conflict of interest … We are sad to report the passing of 1950s heavyweight contender **Clarence Henry**, who died on March 1 at the age of 72. Henry's 33-6-1 (19) career record included wins over **Jimmy Bivins** and **Bob Satterfield**, as well as decision losses to champions **Harold Johnson** and **Archie Moore**.

O'Grady: Brand new gig

THE PUNCHLINES

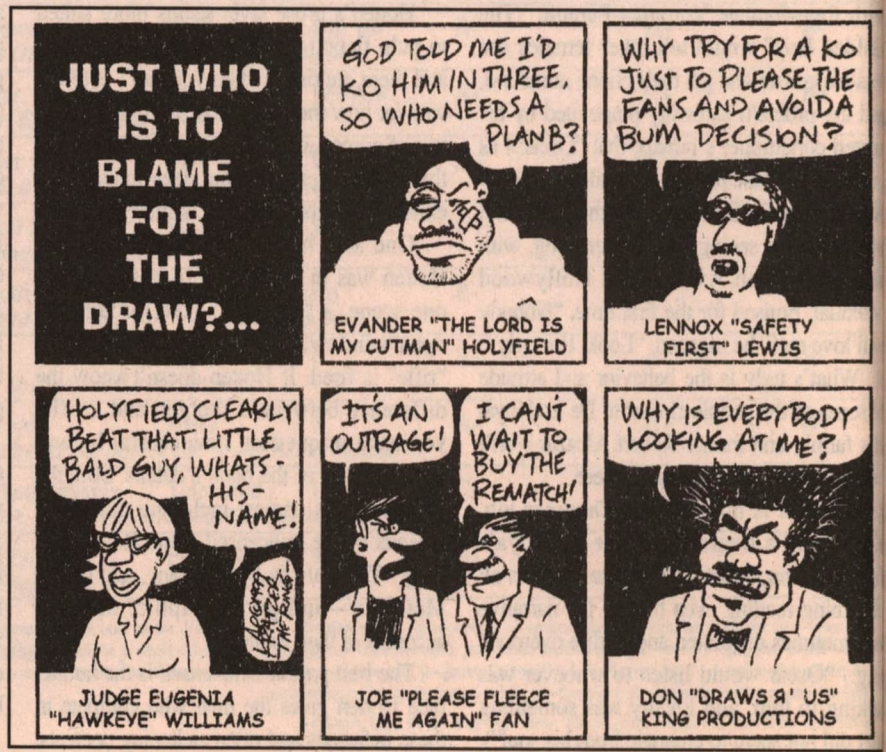
"It's an absolute con. My reaction is shock and total disbelief. If I was [British Prime Minister] Tony Blair I'd cut off all diplomatic relations with America."

—Frank Maloney, manager of Lennox Lewis, on the decision in the Lewis-Evander Holyfield fight

"Well, another tourist got robbed in New York City over the weekend: Lennox Lewis … And what was wrong with Evander Holyfield? He put up about as good a fight as a guest on *The Jerry Springer Show*."

—Jay Leno, host of *The Tonight Show*

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended March 22, 1999)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. OSCAR DE LA HOYA
   Welterweight
2. ROY JONES
   Light Heavyweight
3. FELIX TRINIDAD
   Welterweight
4. SHANE MOSLEY
   Lightweight
5. MARK JOHNSON
   Junior Bantamweight
6. RICARDO LOPEZ
   Strawweight
7. FLOYD MAYWEATHER
   Junior Lightweight
8. NASEEM HAMED
   Featherweight
9. JOHNNY TAPIA
   Bantamweight
10. LENNOX LEWIS
    Heavyweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: There's no question that Lennox Lewis deserves the top spot after his bout with Holyfield. But out of respect for all Holyfield has accomplished and the fact that, technically, he didn't lose to Lewis, "The Real Deal" drops just one rung, from first to second. Ike Ibeabuchi soars from sixth to third on the strength his TKO of previously unbeaten Chris Byrd, who tumbles from fifth to ninth. Ibeabuchi's progress knocked Michael Grant down from third to fourth.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: After suffering another points loss to WBC titlist Juan Carlos Gomez, former champ Marcelo Dominguez falls from fourth to fifth, trading places with Carl Thompson. Ralf Rocchigiani, who hasn't fought since October 4, 1997, has exited due to inactivity. Virgil Hill enters at number 10.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes this month, but Graciano Rocchigiani, who hasn't fought since March 21, 1998, is in danger of suffering the same fate as his brother, Ralf.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: After scoring a ninth-round stoppage of Sugarboy Malinga, Denmark's Mads Larsen claims the 10th position previously occupied by the South African.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: England's Robert McCracken, whose stateside performances have underscored his mediocrity, slides from seventh to ninth.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: New WBA champ David Reid is installed at number two following his title-winning decision over Laurent Boudouani, who, thanks to his strong showing in a losing cause, only slips to third. Julio Cesar Vasquez, inactive since February 21, 1998, departs the rankings.

WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: Steve Johnston is back at the number-two spot after regaining the WBC belt from Cesar Bazan. The way things shake out, WBA boss Jean-Baptiste Mendy descends from second to third, and Bazan from third to fourth. Former IBF champ Phillip Holiday is out after losing to Colin Dunne, who enters the rankings at number nine. Former titlist Orzubek Nazarov, who still hasn't fought since losing the title to Mendy in May '98, falls from sixth to seventh due to inactivity.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Daorung C. Siriwat, who hasn't fought since June 21, 1997, is another victim of inactivity, and leaves the rankings. Entering at number 10 is veteran Cuauhtemoc Gomez, who has been on a winning streak.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: Two departures: Satoshi Iida has retired, and Harold Grey hasn't fought since February 14, 1998. Eric Morel and Victor Godoy crash the rankings at numbers nine and 10, respectively.

FLYWEIGHTS: Former straw and junior fly champ Leo Gamez rockets back into the rankings at number two after winning the WBA 112-pound crown with a crushing third-round kayo of Hugo Soto, who plummets from number two to number five. Chokviwat Chokchai, formerly number 10, is out.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: Juan Cordoba and Osvaldo Guerrero suffered recent losses, and have departed to make room for their respective conquerors, Jorge Arce (eighth) and Jose Sanjuanelo (ninth).

STRAWWEIGHTS: Ala Villamor (formerly number seven), who hasn't fought since March 16, 1996, is long gone, replaced by Andy Tabanas, who enters at 10.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Based on the way he looked against Lewis, Holyfield's former number-three ranking was obviously wrong. The question is where to place Lewis. The WBC champion has to be given credit for his accomplishment, but exactly how great of an accomplishment it was depends on how far over the hill you believe Holyfield was at the time. Therefore, instead of taking over Commander Vander's old spot, Lewis enters the pound-for-pound ranks at number 10. Also, Shane Mosley's consistently busy schedule as IBF lightweight champion earns him the number-four spot, as he leaps over the relatively inactive Mark Johnson. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended March 22, 1999

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

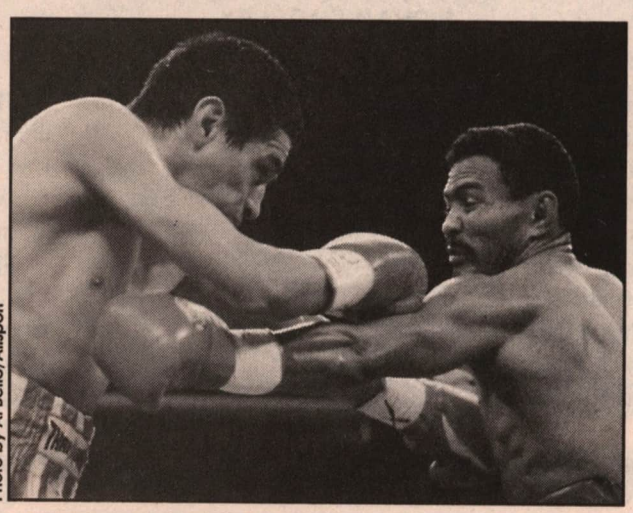


Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

Leo Gamez jabs to Hugo Soto's body en route to claiming the WBA flyweight title and the number-two ranking

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **LENNOX LEWIS** England *34-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** Fairburn, GA *36-3-1 (WBA/IBF Champ)*
3. **IKE IBEABUCHI** Dallas, TX *20-0*
4. **MICHAEL GRANT** Norristown, PA *29-0*
5. **MIKE TYSON** Catskill, NY *46-3*
6. **DAVID TUA** Totowa, NJ *33-1*
7. **ANDREW GOLOTA** Chicago, IL *33-3*
8. **HASIM RAHMAN** Baltimore, MD *30-1*
9. **CHRIS BYRD** Flint, MI *26-1*
10. **SHANNON BRIGGS** New York, NY *31-2*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **FABRICE TIOZZO** France *40-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ** Germany *27-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS** Las Vegas, NV *30-4-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **CARL THOMPSON** England *24-4*
5. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ** Argentina *26-3-1*
6. **IMAMU MAYFIELD** New Brunswick, NJ *18-2*
7. **ROBERT DANIELS** Miami, FL *38-3-1*
8. **SAUL MONTANA** Mexico *32-6*
9. **KENNY KEENE** Emmett, ID *45-3*
10. **VIRGIL HILL** Bismarck, ND *44-3*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES** Pensacola, FL *39-1 (WBC/WBA Champ)*
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** Germany *39-0*
3. **REGGIE JOHNSON** Houston, TX *39-5-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI** Germany *40-4-1*
5. **LOU DEL VALLE** Bronx, NY *28-2*
6. **ERIC HARDING** Philadephia, PA *15-0-1*
7. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** Chicago, IL *36-2*
8. **MICHAEL NUNN** Davenport, IA *53-4*
9. **ANTONIO TARVER** Orlando, FL *12-0*
10. **DERRICK HARMON** Chicago, IL *17-0*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **FRANKIE LILES** N. Hollywood, CA *32-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **JOE CALZAGHE** Wales *26-0*
3. **RICHIE WOODHALL** England *26-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **SVEN OTTKE** Germany *14-0 (IBF Champ)*
5. **CHARLES BREWER** Philadelphia, PA *32-6*
6. **THOMAS TATE** Houston, TX *36-5*
7. **ROBIN REID** England *26-2-1*
8. **ANDREI SCHKALIKOV** Russia *31-4-1*
9. **VINNY PAZIENZA** Cranston, RI *44-7*
10. **MADS LARSEN** Denmark *29-1*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS** Philadelphia, PA *35-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY** Washington, D.C. *26-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **HASSINE CHERIFI** France *26-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **KEITH HOLMES** Washington, D.C. *32-2*
5. **ANTWUN ECHOLS** Davenport, IA *22-2-1*
6. **OTIS GRANT** Canada *31-2-1*
7. **RYAN RHODES** England *18-1*
8. **JULIO CESAR GREEN** Brooklyn, NY *24-3*
9. **ROBERT McCRACKEN** England *33-0*
10. **ROBERT ALLEN** Atlanta, GA *23-3*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **FERNANDO VARGAS**
   Oxnard, CA *16-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **DAVID REID**
   Philadelphia, PA *12-0 (WBA Champ)*
3. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI**
   France *38-3-1*
4. **FRANCISCO CASTILLEJO**
   Spain *44-4 (WBC Champ)*
5. **KEITH MULLINGS**
   Brooklyn, NY *16-5-1*
6. **YORY BOY CAMPAS**
   Mexico *72-3*
7. **HARRY SIMON**
   Namibia *17-0*
8. **WINKY WRIGHT**
   St. Petersburg, FL *38-2*
9. **BRONCO McKART**
   Monroe, MI *36-2*
10. **TONY MARSHALL**
    Albany, NY *31-7-6*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *30-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico *34-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **IKE QUARTEY**
   Ghana *34-1-1*
4. **JAMES PAGE**
   Pittsburg, CA *24-3 (WBA Champ)*
5. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA *41-3-1*
6. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico *42-4-2*
7. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *48-2-1*
8. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA *27-0*
9. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *28-3-1*
10. **SHANNAN TAYLOR**
    Australia *23-0-1*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
   Washington, D.C. *44-2 (WBA Champ)*
2. **TERRONN MILLETT**
   St. Louis, MO *21-1-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *22-1-1*
4. **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *43-1-1*
5. **VINCE PHILLIPS**
   Las Vegas, NV *39-4*
6. **BOLILLO GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *48-3-1*
7. **KHALID RAHILOU**
   France *32-3*
8. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY *19-0*
9. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *100-3-2*
10. **REGGIE GREEN**
    Clinton, MD *29-2*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *31-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *26-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
   France *53-7-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **CESAR BAZAN**
   Mexico *34-3-1*
5. **ISRAEL CARDONA**
   Hartford, CT *31-2*
6. **IVAN ROBINSON**
   Philadelphia, PA *27-2*
7. **ORZUBEK NAZAROV**
   Japan *26-1*
8. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ *29-4*
9. **COLIN DUNNE**
   England *29-1*
10. **JAMES LEIJA**
    San Antonio, TX *36-4-2*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Grand Rapids, MI *20-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **TAKANORI HATAKEYAMA**
   Japan *22-0-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **ROBERTO GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA *32-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *26-3-1*
5. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *24-3-1*
6. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Austin, TX *25-1*
7. **GOYO VARGAS**
   Mexico *38-6-1*
8. **AÑATOLY ALEXANDROV**
   Kazakhstan *35-3*
9. **JOHN BROWN**
   Atlantic City, NJ *19-5*
10. **DIEGO CORRALES**
    Sacramento, CA *26-0*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED**
   England *31-0*
2. **LUISITO ESPINOSA**
   Philippines *44-7 (WBC Champ)*
3. **FRED NORWOOD**
   St. Louis, MO *33-0-1*
4. **DERRICK GAINER**
   Pensacola, FL *27-4*
5. **ANTONIO CERMENO**
   Venezuela *33-2 (WBA Champ)*
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico *28-1*
7. **MANUEL MEDINA**
   Mexico *55-10 (IBF Champ)*
8. **ANGEL VAZQUEZ**
   Hartford, CT *16-0*
9. **CESAR SOTO**
   Mexico *52-7-2*
10. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ**
    Puerto Rico *50-8-3*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **VUYANI BUNGU**
   South Africa *37-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico *32-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Mexico *47-2*
4. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH**
   Las Vegas, NV *22-2*
5. **NESTOR GARZA**
   Mexico *35-1 (WBA Champ)*
6. **KENNEDY McKINNEY**
   Memphis, TN *33-4-1*
7. **CARLOS BARRETO**
   Venezuela *12-0-1*
8. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
   Mexico *24-1-1*
9. **MBULELO BOTILE**
   South Africa *24-1*
10. **DANNY ROMERO**
    Albuquerque, NM *33-3*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **TIM AUSTIN**
   Cincinnati, OH *18-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Albuquerque, NM *45-0-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **VEERAPHOL SAHAPROM**
   Thailand *21-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO**
   Colombia *40-1*
5. **NANA KONADU**
   Ghana *39-4*
6. **JOICHIRO TATSUYOSHI**
   Japan *17-5-1*
7. **PAULIE AYALA**
   Ft. Worth, TX *27-1*
8. **ADAN VARGAS**
   Mexico *30-1-1*
9. **DARIO AZUAGA**
   Paraguay *44-0-1*
10. **CUAUHTEMOC GOMEZ**
    Mexico *43-7*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. *36-1*
2. **IN JOO CHO**
   South Korea *14-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JESUS ROJAS**
   Venezuela *32-7-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *39-2-2*
5. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *18-1-1*
6. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia *30-0*
7. **RATANACHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *35-3*
8. **JOEL LUNA-ZARATE**
   Mexico *32-3-2*
9. **ERIC MOREL**
   Madison, WI *19-0*
10. **VICTOR GODOY**
    Argentina *29-1*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
   Philippines *24-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **LEO GAMEZ**
   Venezuela *31-6-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia *20-0*
4. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *33-2*
5. **HUGO SOTO**
   Argentina *50-6-2*
6. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela *24-5*
7. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *33-1*
8. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *39-3*
9. **RUBEN SANCHEZ-LEON**
   Mexico *23-7-1*
10. **DAVID GUERAULT**
    France *14-0*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *40-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ**
   Nicaragua *25-1-1*
3. **PICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *21-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa *50-10-2*
5. **WILL GRIGSBY**
   St. Paul, MN *14-1-1 (IBF Champ)*
6. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico *53-6-4*
7. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines *25-4-1*
8. **JORGE ARCE**
   Mexico *19-2-1*
9. **JOSE SANJUANELO**
   Colombia *12-0*
10. **YEOSAM CHOI**
    South Korea *18-1*

STRAWWEIGHT
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

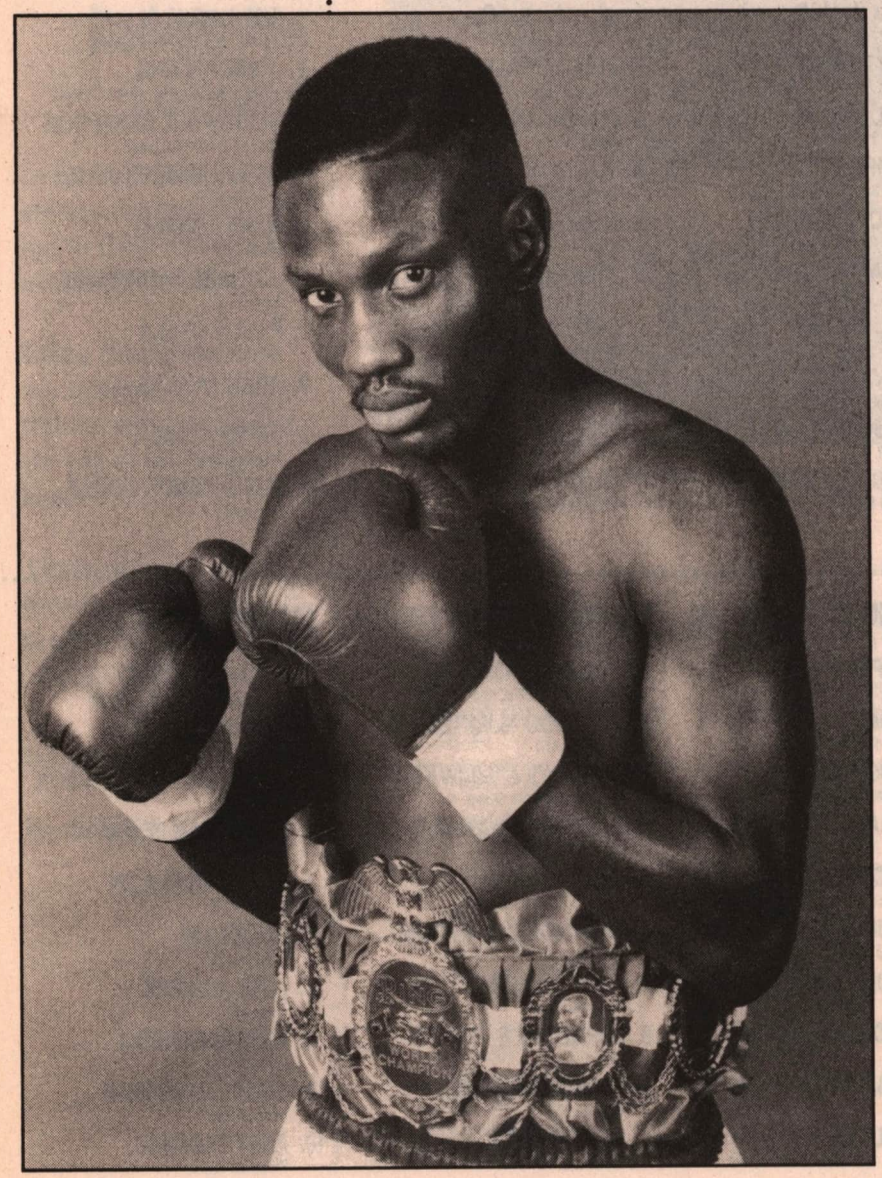
1. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Mexico *47-0-1 (WBC/WBA Champ)*
2. **ZOLANI PETELO**
   South Africa *13-2-2 (IBF Champ)*
3. **WANDEE CHOR CHAREON**
   Thailand *22-3*
4. **SONGKRAM PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *20-1-1*
5. **CHANA PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *38-1*
6. **ROCKY LIN**
   Philippines *26-2*
7. **JOSE AGUIRRE**
   Mexico *20-1-1*
8. **KERMIN GUARDIA**
   Columbia *30-2*
9. **EDGAR CARDENAS**
   Mexico *24-6-1*
10. **ANDY TABANAS**
    Philippines *35-3-1*

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

THE POD PERSON

Even for a long-time admirer of Pernell Whitaker's technical mastery and irrepressible moxie, there was a measure of satisfaction in watching him finally suffer a clear-cut defeat against Felix Trinidad. Face it, anyone who has hot-dogged and taunted as much as Whitaker has in 15 years as a pro deserved a clobbering. And the last thing we needed after 12 rounds that were supposed to help clear up the welterweight picture was another of those unjust verdicts that had already resulted in "Sweet Pea" being the only undefeated fighter in history with two losses and a draw on his record.



"The Pea" in his prime

So why was there no smile on my face after Whitaker was vanquished in Madison Square Garden? Partly because it signaled the end of an era. Though he'll undoubtedly fight again, Whitaker has exited the main stage. He'll never again be a dominant force or a name that's mentioned when the topic is premier matchups at 147 or 154 pounds. And it will take a while to get used to that. The last time Whitaker *wasn't* someone we had to keep our eye on, Ronald Reagan was in his first term in office.

For me, though, what makes Whitaker's departure from the main stage particularly significant is this: It symbolizes the loss of a few things that were once an important part of the Sweet Science but have become virtually extinct. Whether you love him or loathe him, it's hard to deny that Whitaker is one of the last of a) the old-style fighters who were capable of using defense as a dominant weapon, b) the world champions who were staples of free TV, and c) the superstars who kept duking it out in their hometowns even after they made it big in Atlantic City and Las Vegas.

Let's start with the defense. While there are other fighters who are skilled at not getting hit (Johnny Tapia, Erik Morales, Frankie Liles), none can stand flat-footed in the ring center, as Whitaker often did, avoiding punches strictly with head and upper body movement. And with the exception of Roy Jones, none combines defensive prowess with a dominant offensive attack. No better compliment can be paid to Whitaker's "Da

than to say it helped a guy who has less pop in his paws than an angry kitten dominate many of his challengers. The more the opponents missed, the more they were off-balance and vulnerable to his southpaw counters. And because he slipped punches so well, Whitaker was willing to stand flat-footed even with the big hitters, winning the exchanges by virtue of his superior hand speed.

"Come in there with that hard stuff all you want," said Whitaker. "By the time the late rounds come, you're done. It's just something I do to guys, something I put them through mentally that messes them up. After 12 rounds, you never want to see Pernell Whitaker again.

"Guys want me to show 'em how to do it in the gym. But you can't really teach what I got. When I'm gone, no one will ever be able to fight that style again."

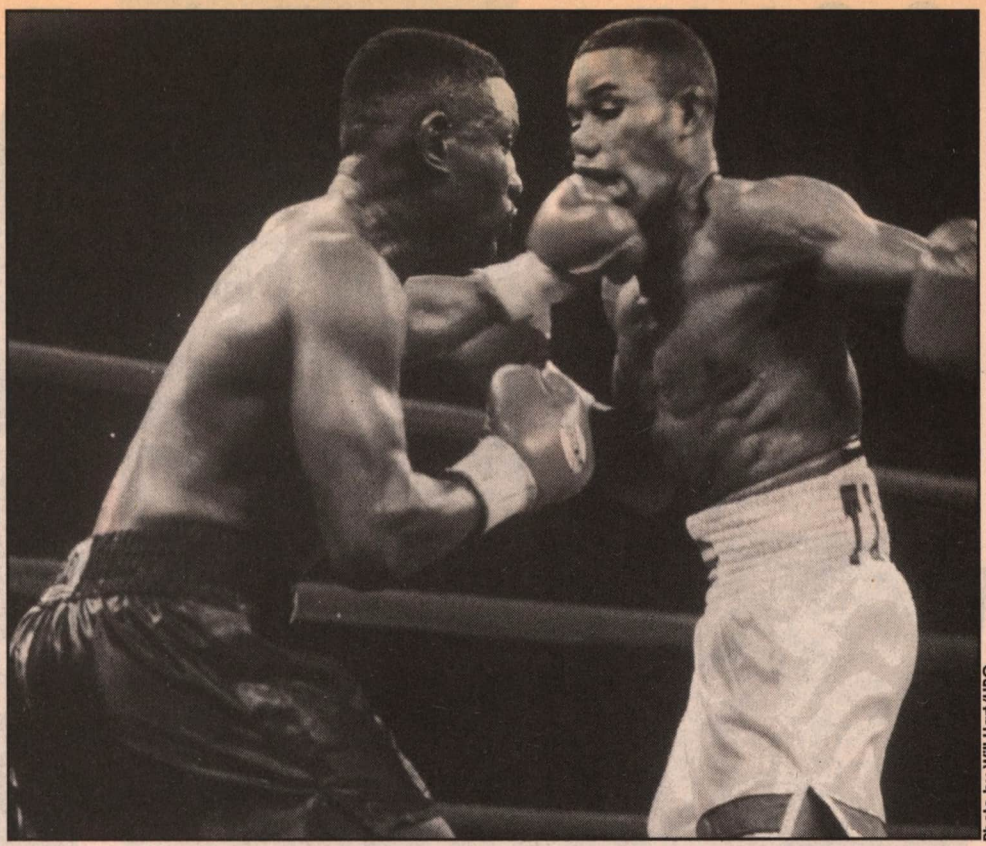


Photo by Will Hart/HBO

Whitaker showed his spunk by taking the fight to Trinidad

Some elements of that style *can* be taught, but who today is willing to invest the time and effort needed to learn it? Defense was a craft Sweet Pea perfected in hundreds of amateur bouts. With fewer and fewer trainers stressing the importance of an all-around game, and with the ability to slip and parry no longer a prerequisite for winning a professional world title, the "next Whitaker" would have to possess not just quickness, intelligence, and great vision, but also incredible patience with his career.

Maybe it's a good thing there is no next Whitaker because much of the country—that segment without regular access to HBO, Showtime, and pay-per-view—would probably never know he existed. Whitaker, like stablemates Evander Holyfield, Meldrick Taylor, Mark Breland, and Tyrell Biggs, was a Saturday matinee fixture. And he could still be found on ABC for a while even after the others had moved to cable or faded away. Whitaker won Olympic gold, made his pro debut, honed his skills against rugged veterans, got robbed by the judges in his first world title try (against Jose Luis Ramirez), won his first world crown, defended the belt, and then avenged his fleecing, all on network TV. In this era of pay-per-view, watching Oscar De La Hoya do just half of that could max out your Visa card.

Though my encounters with him through the years were positive ones, Whitaker isn't an easy person to like. Colleagues have told me about him blowing off interviews and photo sessions. He still won't acknowledge he did anything wrong by testing positive for cocaine, and his insistence that he deserved the decision against Trinidad insulted our intelligence. Whitaker's style sure wasn't the reason ESPN invented SportsCenter, and some of his fights couldn't have kept you on the edge of your seat even if an earthquake was rattling the arena at the same time.

But it's hard to not admire a guy who never ducked anyone and managed to win titles in four weight classes despite conceding the edge in power in virtually every bout. A guy who, after the longest layoff of his career, came back to face not a tuneup softie, but the dangerous Trinidad. And then proceeded to take the fight to the aforementioned assassin. You also can't help but nod in approval when a champion makes sure to remember his fans. To date, Whitaker has fought 14 bouts in his home state of Virginia, six since he won his first world title and could have easily convinced himself that he'd outgrown the small markets of Norfolk, Hampton, and Virginia Beach.

It's too bad Whitaker can't leave the main stage with no regrets—he has enough of them to fill a cement mixer. Screwed against Ramirez. Jobbed against Julio Cesar Chavez. (Remember The Alamodome?) Handed a bum verdict when he tarnished "Golden Boy" De La Hoya, and never given the rematch he deserved. Throw in, too, Whitaker's failed drug test, which cost him a showdown with Ike Quartey. The stubborn Pea probably wouldn't label that a regret now, but he might someday.

There's no such hesitation in acknowledging my regrets. One of them is that time forever marches on, sometimes taking Saturday afternoons in front of the tube, delirious hometown crowds, and now-you-see-him-now-you-don't head feints along with it. ■

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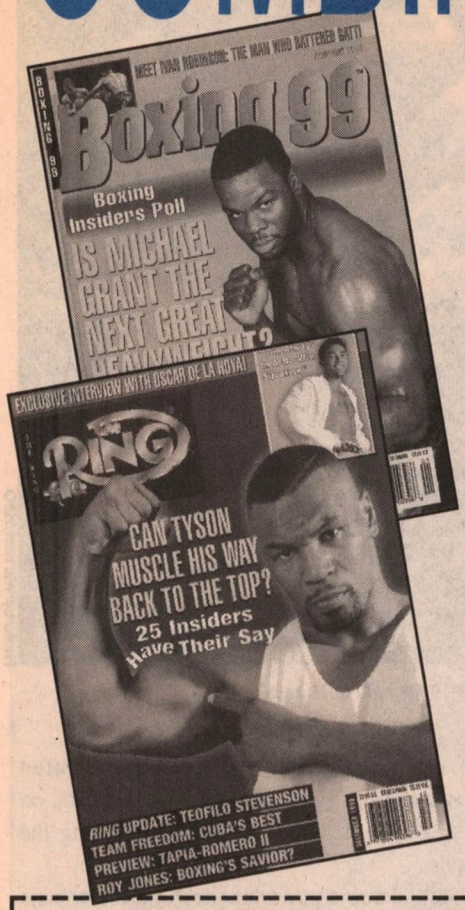

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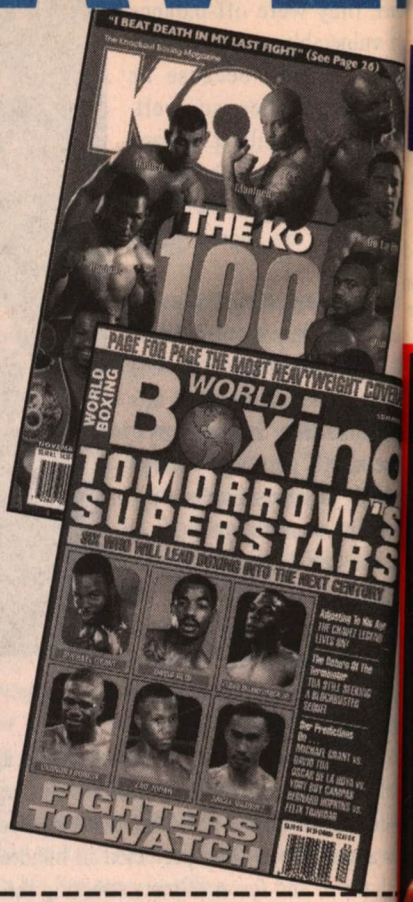

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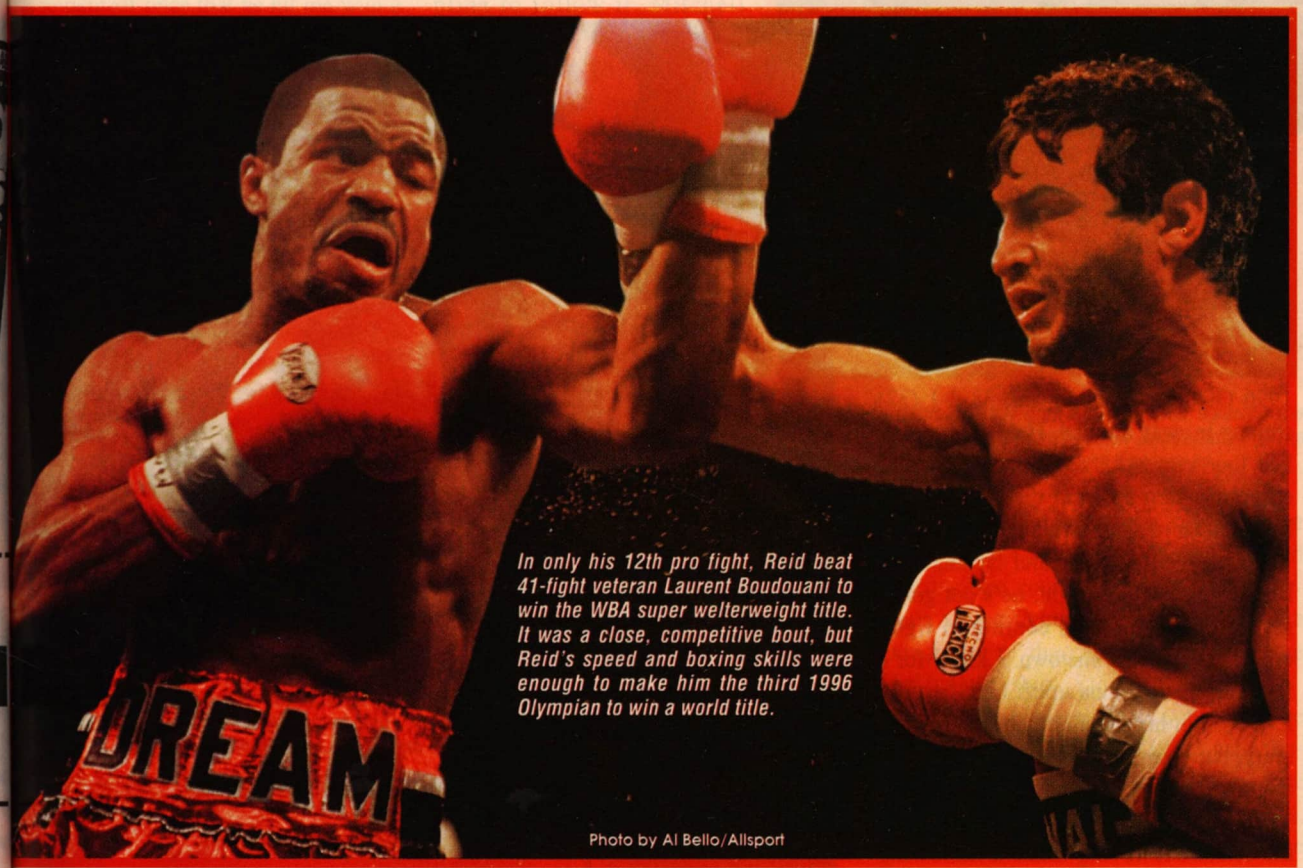
The Golden Road To Stardom

NEW CHAMP DAVID REID HAS MUCH TO SMILE ABOUT (But Not Much To Smile With)

Ninth In A Series



In only his 12th pro fight, Reid beat 41-fight veteran Laurent Boudouani to win the WBA super welterweight title. It was a close, competitive bout, but Reid's speed and boxing skills were enough to make him the third 1996 Olympian to win a world title.

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

y Nigel Collins

David Reid still had six or seven hours before climbing into the ring and fighting Laurent Boudouani for the WBA super welterweight title, but he'd already reached the point where he could hardly contain himself. He was so primed for the moment that sitting still for more than a few minutes was out of the question. Instead, he shadowboxed in his Atlantic City hotel suite, laughing and talking as he tossed rhythmic punches at an imaginary opponent.

"There's no denying me, man," said Reid as he cruised through the familiar ritual on automatic pilot, his sentences coming in short bursts between combinations. "I'm gonna run with it while I've got the opportunity. I'm gonna take this, man."

Reid jabbed, hooked, and turned over a compact right, the muscles in his arms and thighs straining against his jeans and T-shirt.

"I know for a fact I've got this. I've just got to take advantage of the opportunity."

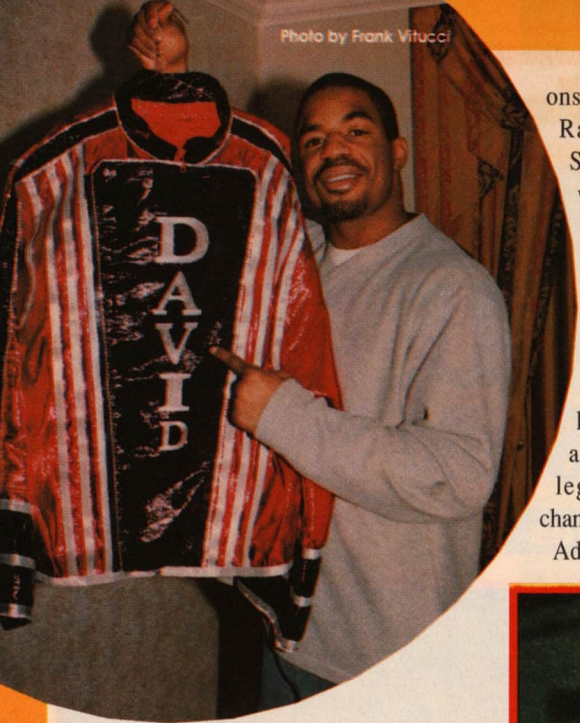
He dipped to his right at the waist, dipped to his left, and then pivoted away from a phantom counterpunch.

"I know I'm in tip-top shape. I can't wait. This is my time to shine. Got the *whole* world watching."

Reid's hands were a blur as he shoeshined to the body, came upstairs with a hook, and finished with another right.

"I'm coming to win this damned title!"

The 25-year-old Reid was as relaxed as anyone could be under the circumstances, and even though he sometimes chuckled at his own words, you could tell that he was



Ready to go. Reid shows off the jacket he wore into the ring later that day to challenge Boudouani. So far, "The American Dream" has worn a new outfit for every fight.

pumping himself up. This was Reid's biggest fight since becoming the only American boxer to win a gold medal at the 1996 Olympics. Boudouani, 38-2-1 (32) coming in, was no joke. He'd already tallied four successful defenses, and was an enormous step up from the first 11 men Reid had faced since turning pro.

"This is no peaches and cream," said Reid. "This guy can fight; he's not gonna give his title up. He's coming to fight, especially in my hometown. I know for a fact that that's gonna uplift him, because I've been in his situation before. It can be scary, but you've got to go in there and do it anyway."

Reid has indeed known the flip side of the situation, having made a harrowing foray into Argentina for the 1995 Pan-Am Games, where the fans cursed and threw debris at him. But he still came home with the gold. So it wasn't like Reid hadn't been in a few tough spots since he took up the sport at age 10. But he was right about Boudouani, and later that same day he would have to call on all of his amateur experience, athletic skill, and youthful exuberance to take the crown from a skilled and savvy champion.

The easy-going Reid is used to pressure, and handles it better than most. Even so, this was different. Not every Olympic gold medalist makes it to the championship level in the pros—guys like Ray Mercer, Howard Davis, and Sugar Ray Seales never did. If Reid was going to write the next chapter in his storybook career, he had to beat Boudouani. A loss would set him back immeasurably.

"Anybody who graduates from college, they can take a fall and come back," said Reid in one of his more reflective moments. "But a guy like me, I don't have no college education. This is my only chance."

Adding to the pressure was the fact that two of his Olympic teammates h already won professional titles. "Pre Boy" Floyd Mayweather wore the W super featherweight belt, and Fernan Vargas was the new IBF 154-pou champ. Comparisons were inevitab especially with Vargas, the other brig young light in a suddenly glamorous di sion. But Reid isn't a braggart; his prefi bluster was built on a solid foundation accomplishments.

"Once I made it into the Games, I kne could do anything," said Reid. "The g medal was mine. I fought like my life was the line. But that's what boxing is all abou

Boudouani attacked Reid's vulnerable left eye with right hands (above), but didn't punch o enough to offset the challenger's busier workrate. Reid frequently controlled the tempo of the fi with his left jab (below), throwing four times as many jabs as the Frenchman.

While Boudouani didn't threaten his e, the Frenchman with the five o'clock adow and dangerous right did his best to n "The American Dream's" first title ht into a nightmare. Like everybody se, Boudouani knew all about Reid's opy left eyelid, and like the astute pro- ssional he his, he went right after it. udouani immediately got down to work the first round, reaching around Reid's ard and nailing him with a biting right t landed perilously close to the left eye. e challenger made a face and moved ay, but he'd been stung. And it uldn't be the last time.

"I remember once that he hit me with a od shot and dazed me, and I looked at y feet and, you know, the only thing on y mind was keeping my balance," said id after surviving several crises en route winning a unanimous decision at the oardwalk Convention Center. "I was zed a couple of other times, but I didn't ow it."

Another thing Reid didn't show after e fight was his normally toothy grin. A rticularly painful right had rearranged is dental work in the fourth round, and Reid looked like he was auditioning for a b as a ventriloquist at the postfight press nference, trying his best to talk with his outh shut.

"The weirdest stuff happens to me in oxing," said the new champ. "Before I ent to camp, I had a temporary tooth put n my mouth. And when I boxed my man Boudouani, he knocked it out! That's why I'm not smiling too much. I'm normally a smiling dude. Boudouani is one of the best junior middleweights out there. He's a sneaky dude. I could see out of my left eye, but believe me, that right hand was coming a little bit too fast."

Al Mitchell, Reid's trainer, adviser, and de facto father, had watched tapes of Boudouani, and had mapped out a fight plan that he knew would carry his prize pupil to victory, if only Reid could muster the discipline to follow it. Mitchell knew the best way to counteract the champion's right-handed attack was with speed, boxing skills, and a strength-sapping body attack. But Reid was anxious to look impressive. Not only were his family and homeboys rooting him on from ringside, a spectacular knockout would sure look good for the HBO cameras.

"Dave has that hammer, and he tried to let that hammer go," said Mitchell. "And that's the difference when you've got young fighters. They think they can just jump out there and hop on everybody. But in the middle rounds, when he settled down, he started working behind the jab, throwing the straight right hand to the body, and when I saw that, I said, 'Hey, we're in the ballgame.'"

Reid also indulged in some early trash talk, a factor that may have contributed to the temporary tooth flying straight up into the air like a tiny, porcelain rocket ship.

"Dave has to understand this is a business; it's not a game," said Mitchell. "He has to keeps his mouth shut and his hands up."

Boudouani doesn't speak English, so he didn't understand what Reid was saying anyway. His main problem was that he didn't throw enough punches. It had been the same way in his two controversial title fights with Guillermo Jones (D 12, W 12). Certainly, Boudouani is very effective when he cuts loose, but Mitchell realized that the best course of action for an energetic young fighter like Reid was to take advantage of the champ's waiting game and outhustle him.

Reid's jab was erratic. Sometimes he jammed it into Boudouani's face with conviction, at others he failed to step in close enough to reach the target. But hit or miss, the jab helped him control the tempo of the fight. And when he went to the body, you could tell Boudouani felt it. Still, enough of the defending champion's right hands landed to raise a walnut-sized knot on Reid's left cheek. And although assistant trainer Fred Jenkins did an expert job wielding the Enswell, there was always a danger that the vulnerable eyelid would be further compromised.

"After the sixth round, I had it very close," admitted Mitchell. "But I saw that Dave was picking it up, and he got smart. He stopped trying to load up, started fighting. He had three or four really outstanding rounds."

(Continued on page 75)

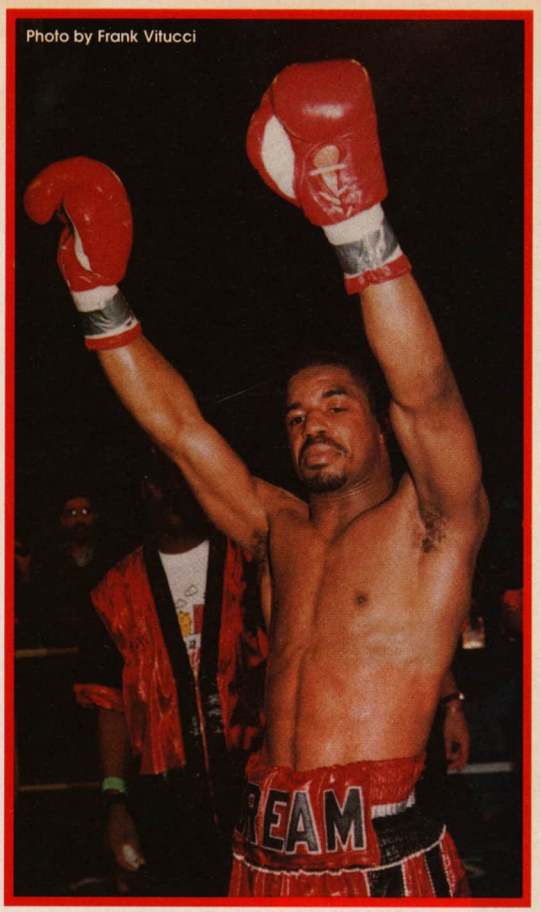


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Reid got the decision, but didn't get to pose wearing the WBA belt. Apparently, somebody from Boudouani's camp took off with it before the decision was announced.

Photo by Frank Vitucci

The price of victory. There will be further surgery on Reid's droopy left eyelid before he makes his first defense.

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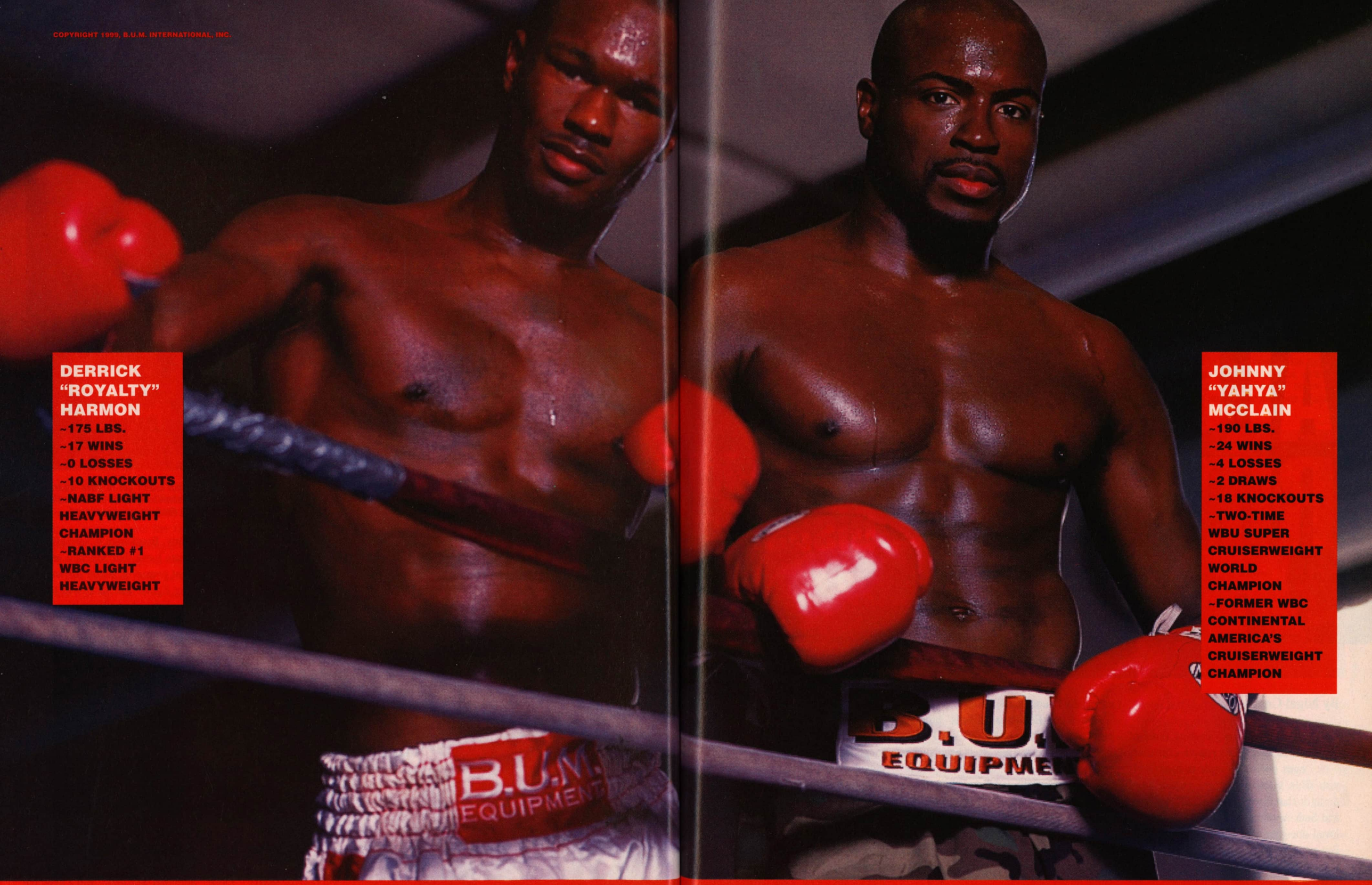

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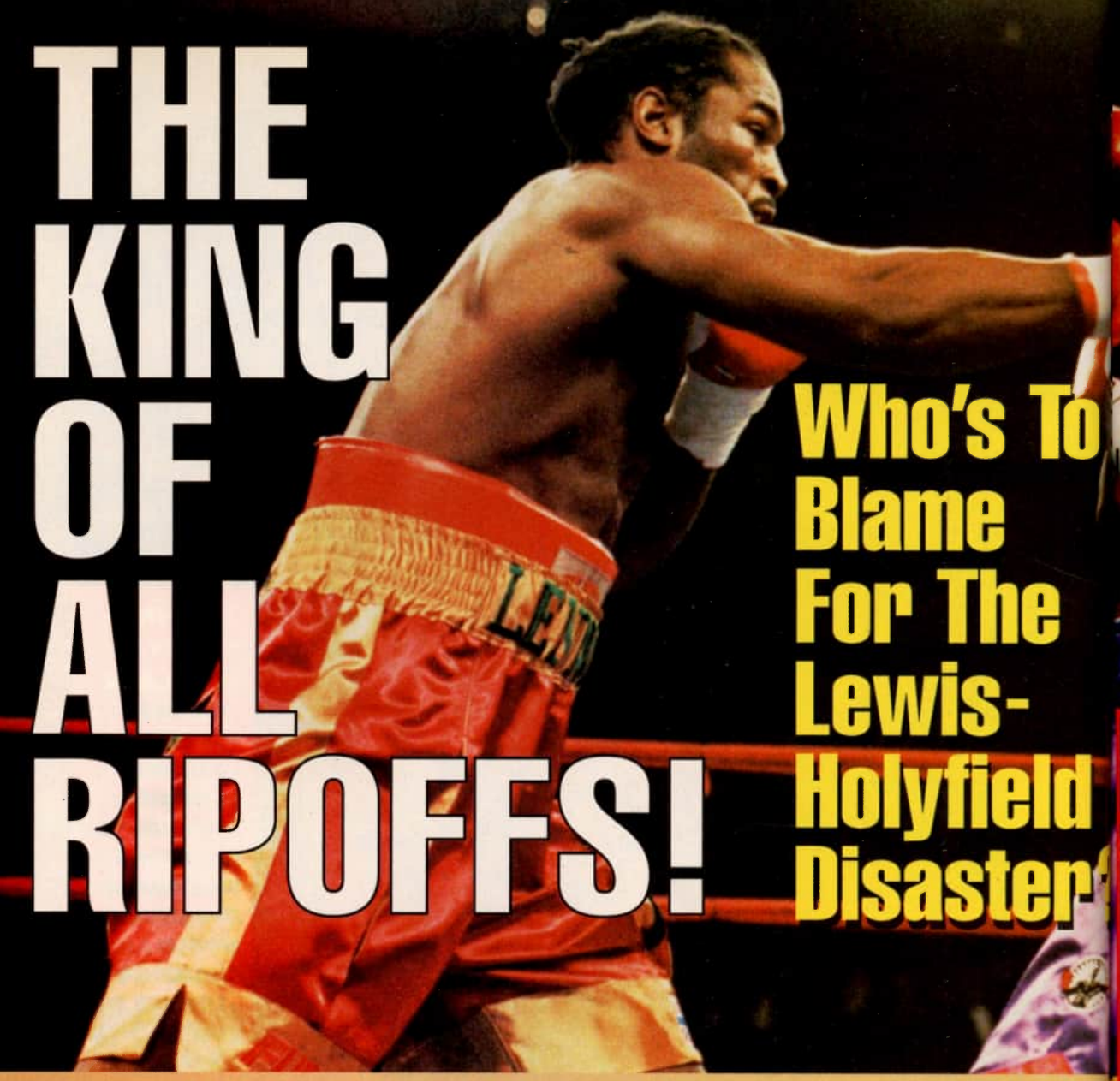

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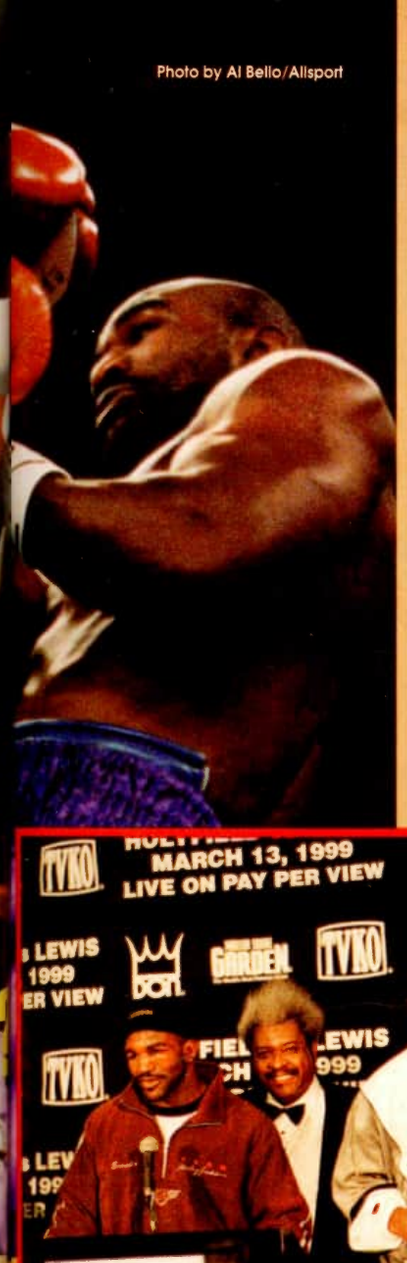


Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

Lewis' potent right hand, along with his long left jab, allowed him to control much of the fight, but two of the three official judges failed to reflect his dominance in ruling the fight a draw. Afterward, Don King was all smiles as he shared the dais with Holyfield, Lewis, and Lewis' Union Jack-wearing manager, Frank Maloney (below left). The next day, the newspaper headline expressed trainer Emanuel Steward's feelings (below right).

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

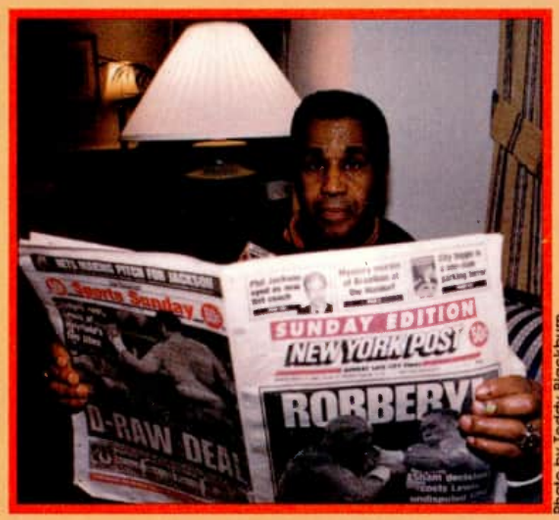


Photo by Teddy Blackburn

By Nigel Collins

They sat in a row, wearing three of the saddest faces you've ever seen, eyes downcast, spirits broken. If you didn't know better, you'd have thought that Panos Eliades, Dino Duva, and Seth Abraham had just watched their loved ones perished in a horrific accident. But what they had watched was a boxing match, and what had died was the dream that the heavyweight championship of the world would be unified again that night, that when the fight was over, one man would rule, the undisputed champion. What damned near everybody got instead, especially Lennox Lewis, was the shaft.

Duva and Eliades are Lewis' promoters, and Abraham is HBO/TVKO's top boxing executive. They'd all been sucker punched and were still in a state of shock. Evander Holyfield and Lewis had yet to make their appearances at the postfight press conference, and into the eye of the storm of controversy that followed one of the most scandalous decisions in recent boxing history strode Don King, a radiant smile on his face.

King was the happiest man at Madison Square Garden on a night when most of the 21,284 in attendance went home decidedly unhappy. If a heavyweight champion was crowned the night of March 13, wasn't the guy wearing the bound-u dreadlocks, or the bald-headed man fought. No, it was the guy with the mo famous hairdo in boxing.

The disgraceful draw, which robbe boxing of its first universal heavyweig champion since 1992, had emotions ru ning white hot, and a lot of the anger w directed toward King. Was he the pupp master, somehow controlling things behi the scenes? Roy Jones, HBO's broadca co-host, was among the most outspoken King's critics.

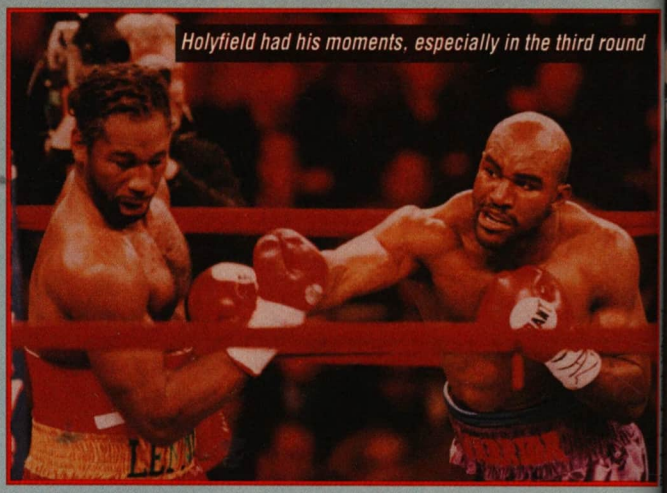
"I had the same thing happen to me Seoul, Korea [at the '88 Olympics]," sa Jones. "I represented my country to the best of my ability, and the people from the other country felt ashamed that their country treated me that way. I'm like Larry [HBO boxing analyst Merchant], ashamed that we treated Lennox Lewis the way we did, because he gave it an all-out effort. But any time Don King's involved, you can expect a draw to come from somewhere. Ask Pernell Whitaker about the Julio Cesar Chavez fight. You know that something like that was in the air if [King] is here. That's just the way it goes. And that's the type of thing that makes you stray away from boxing."

Well said, Roy, your opinion makes sense. Without promotional control of Holyfield's two-thirds of the heavyweight title, King's empire would be drastically diminished. But where's the proof? You can't convict a man just because a big-time bummer turned out great for him. As of this writing, all accusations are based on purely circumstantial evidence. Perhaps the best thing boxing lovers can do is pray that the rancid decision was the result of incompetence.

King's main refrain throughout the aftermath was "Let's do it again!" And less than 24 hours after the fight, presidents Jose Sulaiman (WBC), Bob Lee (IBF), and Gilberto Mendoza (WBA) issued a rare unilateral decree, ordering a rematch within six months. Some would point to that and say it proves that King was in cahoots with the Alphabet Boys. Others would say that the organizations were finally doing the right thing for a change. As King would be quick to point out, in boxing, it's frequently all a matter of interpretation.

"You have to understand that judging is subjective," King told the media, spinning his web of words so cunningly, you didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "They're human beings. The significant thing is that the Brit [Larry O'Connell], Lennox Lewis' countryman, is the one who made it a draw, 115-115.

THE BORE BEFORE THE UPROAR


Holyfield had his moments, especially in the third round

If it hadn't been for the decision, everybody would have been talking about what a disappointing fight the draw between WBC heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis and WBA/IBF champion Evander Holyfield had been. Sure there were a couple of moments of hard-hitting drama, but not many. Holyfield finally got old, confirming something many have suspected for a while. And while Lewis showed discipline and skill, he boxed like a man worried that a fight might break out.

Holyfield, 215, Atlanta, Georgia, gave the first two rounds away, apparently confident that his prediction of a divinely pre-ordained, third-round knockout was a done deal. He came out firing in the third, nailing Lewis with several powershots. For half a round, he looked a reasonable facsimile of the Holyfield of old, and if he could have kept it up, Lewis would have been in for an entirely different fight. But he couldn't. And when the round ended, the prediction came back and hit "The Holy Warrior" in the face like one of Lewis' long left jabs.

"I made a prediction that I would knock him out in the third round. I was wrong," said Holyfield. "Maybe it's the next fight that he gets knocked out in the third round."

Lewis, 246, London, England, made his most definitive statement in the fifth. Early in the round, Holyfield missed a wild, off-balance swing, and Lewis countered over the top with a thudding right to the head. The punch spun Holyfield in a semi-circle and trapped him on the ropes, where Lewis bombed away with his right. The 36-year-old three-time heavyweight champion survived Lewis' salvo, but ultimately couldn't get past his far-reaching left.

How appropriate that it was the straight left, the foundation of the British school of boxing, that allowed Lewis to control much of the fight. But like so many British heavyweights, Lewis doesn't always punch his weight, and a lot of his rights were thrown with medium force—others were corkers.

After splitting the first four rounds, Lewis dominated following his big fifth round, and Holyfield didn't really get back into it until the ninth. He displayed a lot of the tell-tale signs of a shot fighter. He couldn't pull the trigger, punch when the other guy punched, or sustain any kind of attack for more than 30 seconds. Holyfield threw so few punches that, according to CompuBox, he was ultimately outgunned 130 to 348 in total punches connected. Lewis' numbers were so overwhelming, he was comfortable enough to shake his hips and showboat the last few rounds. That was after Commander Vander had got in one more lick in the 10th, a right hand that reminded everybody of what might have been if the pair had met a year or so ago.

When asked why he didn't finish off the old champion, Lewis said: "I watched a lot of Evander Holyfield's tapes, and that's when he suckers a lot of people in. I didn't want to fall for that. I just wanted to go and win the fight hands down. He was basically trying to use his experience to bring me in, but that didn't happen."

THE RING scored the fight 117-112 in favor of the 33-year-old Lewis, who doesn't deserve to have a draw on his 34-1-1 (27) record. Neither should Holyfield, who despite being 36-3-1 (25), should actually have four losses.

The referee was Arthur Mercante Jr., who handled the bout intelligently.

Television: TVKO

Promoters: Don King Productions in association with Panix of the U.S., Main Events, and Madison Square Garden

(3-13-99)

—NC

"I don't like to be second-guessing the judges. The judges were supported by all the world bodies and the New York State Athletic Commission, and they rendered a decision; they did the best they could. Should we castigate them, vilify them because you didn't have their eyeballs? If you had their eyeballs, you'd have probably had the same thing."

King even threw a consolatory bone to Lewis, telling the fighter's mother, Violet, that he agreed with her when she said the obvious, that her son won the fight.

"I may well agree with you," said King, all smiles and homespun charm. "But the judges didn't agree with either one of us. But from your point of view, I understand it, and I go with you. But what do you do when you have a dispute? You resolve it. Let's do it again. Let's make it happen. We ain't gonna let anybody get away with this. No, they've got to fight again. Somebody's got to be the winner. The question still hovers over the arena: Who is the best?"

King is wrong in his final assertion. Lewis won the fight from Manhattan to London and back again. True, he neve came close to knocking Holyfield off hi feet, and forget knocking him out. But th best any competent, clear-eyed judge coul give dear old Vander was four rounds. H didn't have it that night, and may neve have it again. For whatever reason, two o the three judges, Eugenia "Jean" William (115-113, Holyfield) and Larry O'Conne (115-115), blew it. And while some ma quibble with the margin, at least Sout African Stanley Christodoulou (116-11

(Continued on page 7

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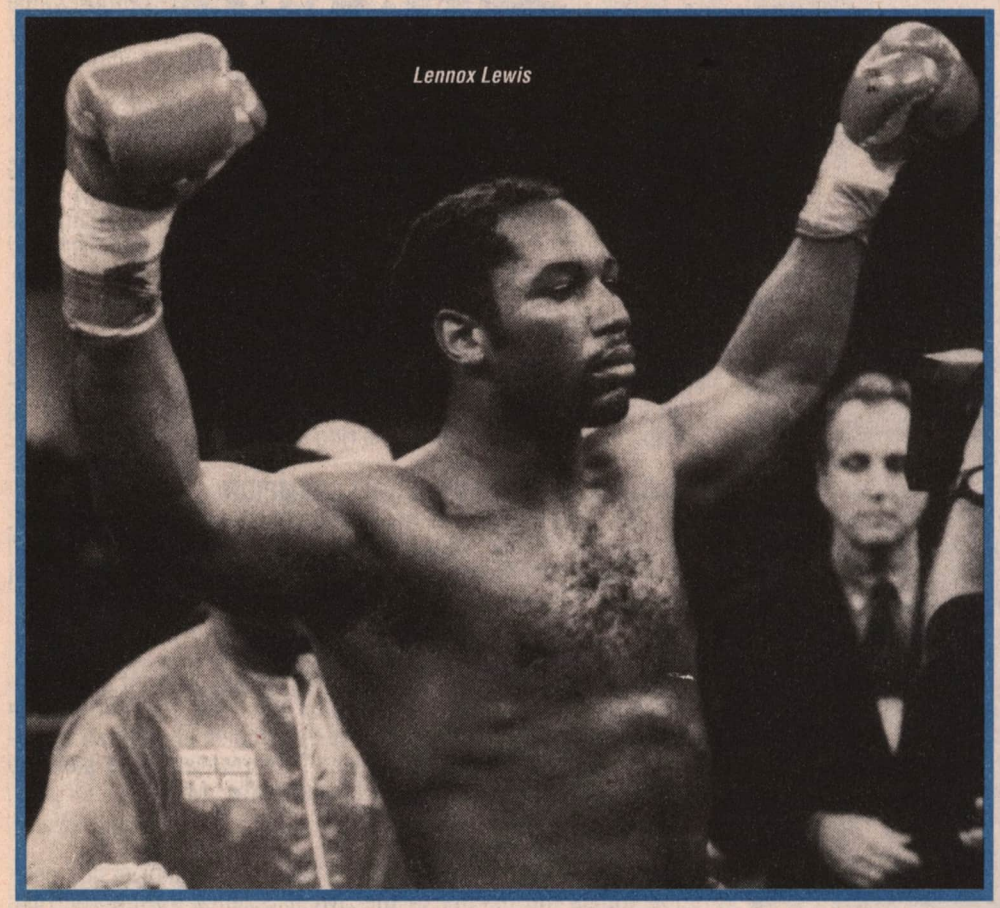
Our Exclusive Annual Report

THE STATE OF THE GAME



Lennox Lewis

By Nigel Collins, Eric Raskin, and Joe Santoliquito

Make no mistake about it. The disgraceful Lennox Lewis-Evander Holyfield decision hurt boxing. Hurt it badly. And what makes it even worse is that the sport was in the midst of a significant upswing when this latest scandal hit. But while the mainstream media will undoubtedly draw the conclusion that boxing is once again in danger of going down for the count, it would be wrong to overlook much of the positive that has taken place in recent months.

The best thing boxing has going for it right now is that some of the biggest names are actually fighting each other, which is all that is ever really needed to make fans happy and the sport prosper. Regardless of whether or not you agreed with the decisions, the fact that Oscar De La Hoya and Ike Quartey, Felix Trinidad and Pernell Whitaker, and Lewis and Holyfield actually fought each other is great news. If this trend of star-vs.-star matchmaking continues, the stench emanating from the Lewis-Holyfield travesty will eventually blow away.

Also on the plus side is the emergence of talented new champions such as Floyd Mayweather, Shane Mosley, Fernando Vargas, and David Reid. With young guns like them on the scene, the decline of old heroes such as Holyfield, Mike Tyson, and Pernell Whitaker won't weaken the sport nearly as much as it would have in the past.

And if you're searching for a silver lining to the Lewis-Holyfield travesty, look at it this way: Perhaps such an irrational decision in such a high-profile fight will give Senator John McCain the final bit of ammunition he needs to get the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Bill passed by Congress and signed into law.

HEAVYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Lennox Lewis

Best Boxer
Lennox Lewis

Most Protected
Butterbean

Is He Still Around?
Razor Ruddock

Matchmaker's Dream
Lennox Lewis-Michael Grant

Best-Kept Secret
Derrick Jefferson

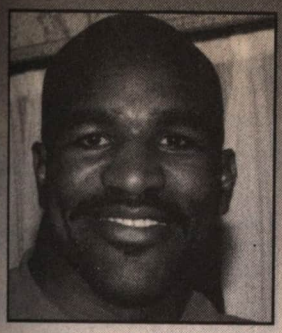
Deserves A Title Shot
Ike Ibeabuchi

Most Fun To Watch
Mike Tyson

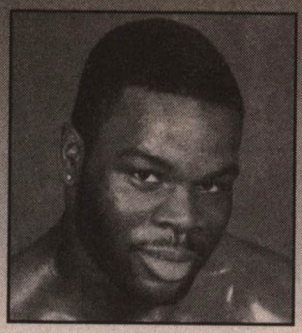
On The Way Down
Evander Holyfield

Underrated
John Ruiz

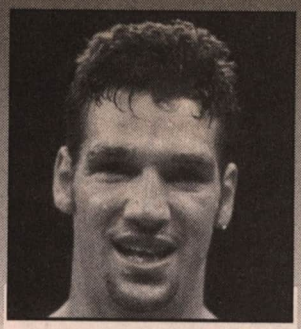
Best Fight In 1998
Lennox Lewis KO 5
Shannon Briggs



Evander Holyfield



Michael Grant



Lou Savarese

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Forget the moronic decision in Lennox Lewis' unification bout with Evander Holyfield; the WBC champion is the best heavyweight in the world. True, he failed to take the fight out of the judges' hands by stopping the WBA/IBF titlist, but that doesn't mean he shouldn't get his props. While it won't right the wrong that has been done to him, at least Lewis will get an opportunity to prove his superiority again in the rematch. One can't help but wish that the laidback Englishman was a little more charismatic, but he's proved himself inside the ring, and that's what really counts.

Beyond Lewis and Holyfield, the division has a respectable number of quality prospects. Undefeated Michael Grant and Ike Ibeabuchi are widely considered the heirs apparent to the throne, as both have the size, power, and ring generalship to punch their way to the top. While Grant may possess more potential, Ibeabuchi's stoppage of Chris Bird in March made him the more proven commodity.

While other contenders such as Andrew Golota, Lou Savarese, and David Tua are also positioned well and could surprise, their weaknesses have already been exposed, and we pretty much know what they can and cannot do. Hasim Rahman, however, is a different story. He was way out in front when Tua nailed him after the bell, and still defending himself when the ref stopped the fight. "The Rock" won't make anybody forget that guy from Brockton, Massachusetts, who sometimes used the same nickname, but Rahman is a well-schooled fighter who could definitely be a factor in the division's future.

Think About It: By the time THE RING publishes the next "State Of The Game," we will have entered the year 2000. A hundred years ago, in the first heavyweight championship fight of the 20th century, Jim Jeffries retained the title with a one-round knockout of Jack Finnegan. Any guesses as to who the contestants will be in the first heavyweight title bout of the 21st century?

CRUISERWEIGHT

Who says a lack of star power and gifted fighters is such a bad thing? The utter mediocrity of the 190-pound division from top to bottom actually made it one of boxing's most exciting divisions in 1998, as we were treated to many entertaining, if not particularly meaningful, bouts between evenly matched warriors.

The year kicked off with Arthur Williams' grueling 12-round decision win over Adolpho Washington in January. Later in the year, Williams captured the IBF title in an enjoyable scrap with Imamu Mayfield that saw both men climb off the canvas. Two of the best fights of '98 in any division were the Carl

CRUISERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Juan Carlos Gomez

Best Boxer
Virgil Hill

Most Protected
Vassiliy Jirov

Is He Still Around?
Tommy Hearns

Matchmaker's Dream
Juan Carlos Gomez-Fabrice Tiozzo

Best-Kept Secret
Dale Brown

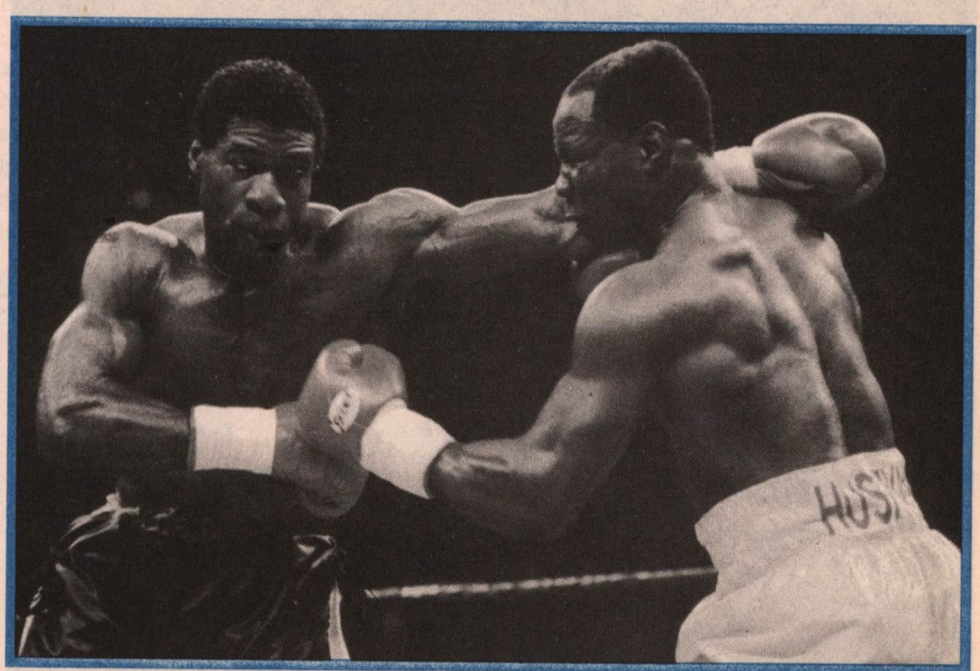
Deserves A Title Shot
Kenny Keene

Most Fun To Watch
Carl Thompson

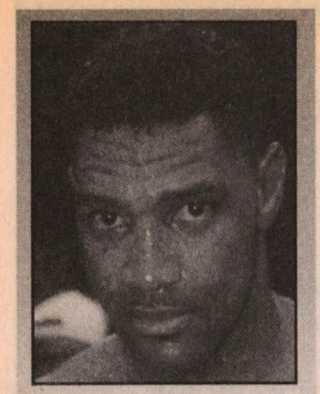
On The Way Down
Don Diego Poeder

Underrated
Sajjad Abdul-Aziz

Best Fight In 1998
Carl Thompson W 12
Chris Eubank



Carl Thompson and Chris Eubank go to war



Arthur Williams

Thompson-Chris Eubank wars, in which Eubank's heart carried him to glory, if not victory. Add in Juan Carlos Gomez' close decision win over Marcelo Dominguez for the WBC belt, as well as Kenny Keene's bloodbath with Rocky Gannon and Robert Daniels' come-from-behind kayo of Don Diego Poeder, and you simply can't call the cruisers a dull division.

You can continue to call it talent-deprived, however. At 34, Williams is an inspiring but weak champion, though he did do us the favor of exposing Mayfield. WBA champ Fabrice Tiozzo is competent, but he's talking of a move to heavyweight before long. Only Gomez shows promise as a young fighter who could bring respectability to the division.

Think About It: The last time a cruiserweight cracked THE RING's pound-for-pound ratings was ... well, never. Since we began rating the fight game's all-around top 10 in 1990, nobody at 190 pounds has ever made the list. That shouldn't come as any surprise, though, when you consider the most exceptional cruiser champs of this decade have been Orlin Norris, Al Cole, and Bobby Czyz, who aren't exactly Chavez, Whitaker, and Jones.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

There was plenty of speculation a year ago as to what Roy Jones would do: make the move up to heavyweight, or stay at light heavy and continue dominating a lukewarm division? Jones decided to stay, silencing any rumors to the contrary by passing on a possible matchup with flabby ex-champion Buster Douglas on the advice of his father. Still, after a pretty inactive 1997, Jones came back last year with a vengeance, re-establishing himself as one of the best, if not *the* best, pound-for-pound fighter in the world today.

Jones makes this division uninteresting because he is light years ahead of everyone else. He started the year as a "Champion In Recess" and finished '98 holding the WBC and WBA light heavyweight belts. Jones handed veteran Virgil Hill the first kayo loss of his career in a non-title bout, snapping an eight-month layoff. Then he followed by taking the WBA title from Lou Del Valle with a unanimous decision in July. Jones, however, was knocked down for the first time in his career against Del Valle. But he concluded the year by beating the game Otis Grant by 10th-round knockout.

Solid lefthander Reggie Johnson, the IBF light heavy king, and powerful Germa Dariusz Michalczewski pos the only threats to Jones, an both are longshots. Johnso was slowed by a rotator cu injury and defended just onc in his first year as champ Michalczewski, who fough three times last year, knockin out Andrea Magi, Mark Prince and Drake Thadzi, could be th

Dariusz Michalczewski meets Roy Jones

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Roy Jones

Best Boxer
Roy Jones

Most Protected
Glen Kelly

Is He Still Around?
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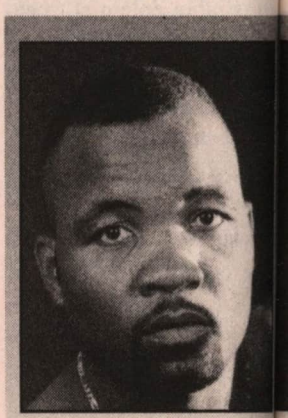


Reggie Johnson

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Joe Calzaghe

Best Boxer
Sven Ottke

Most Protected
Frankie Liles

Is He Still Around?
Sugarboy Malinga

Matchmaker's Dream
Richie Woodhall-Joe Calzaghe

Best-Kept Secret
Syd Vanderpool

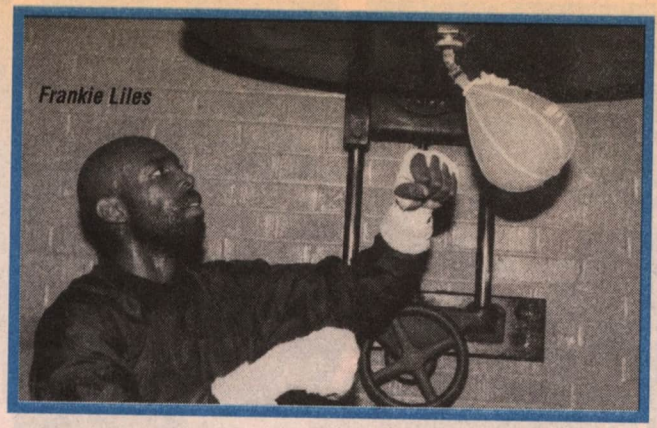
Deserves A Title Shot
Joe Calzaghe

Most Fun To Watch
Vinny Pazienza

On The Way Down
Vincenzo Nardiello

Underrated
Jaffa Ballogou

Best Fight In 1998
Charles Brewer KO 10 Herol Graham


Frankie Liles

better fight for Jones. There are some decent prospects coming up in Richard Hall, Glenn Robinson, Antonio Tarver, and Derrick Harmon, and it's anybody's guess who will take over if Jones is serious about retiring around the end of '99.

Think About It: Johnson and Jones, who combined hold all three light heavyweight belts, also share another distinction: They are two of only seven boxers to ever hold middleweight and light heavyweight titles. The others are Bob Fitzsimmons, Dick Tiger, Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns, and Iran Barkley.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

This division is a jumbled mess without any prime-time appeal, though it does possess one of the best names in boxing, Sven Ottke, the IBF champion. Because of the dearth of talent, the chances for a big fight are dismally low, drawing from a pool that includes the relatively unknown and light-hitting Ottke, WBA champ Frankie Liles, and WBC champ Richie Woodhall.

Perhaps Joe Calzaghe can add some flare to this lackluster class. The unpredictable Welsh southpaw with the fast, heavy hands could be the best boxer in the division—and is definitely the best non-champion. Calzaghe moved a step closer to a recognized world title with a decision victory over Robin Reid in February '99.

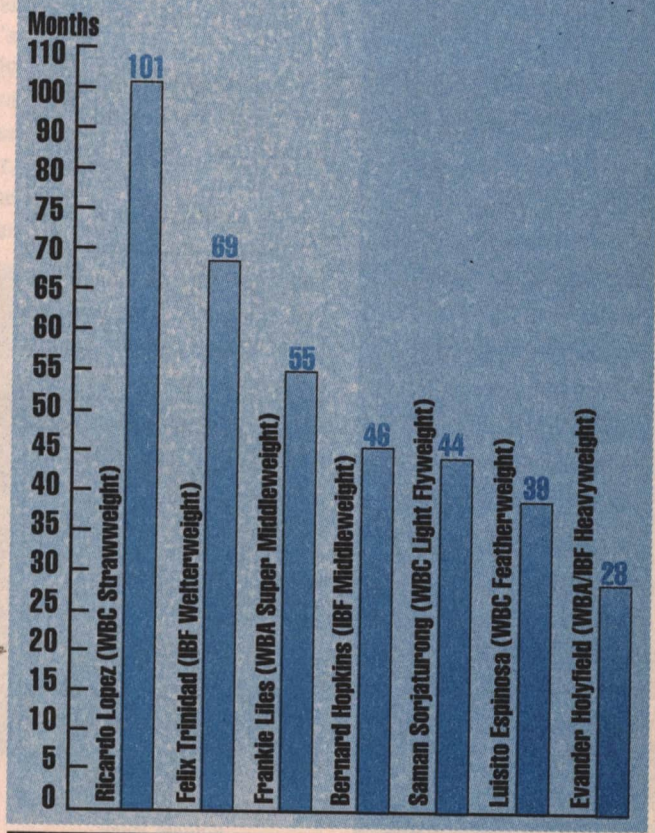
The division may be forced to rely on two cagey veterans, Vinny Pazienza and Thomas Tate, to stimulate some interest. Pazienza's energy, sentimental support, and marketability keep him an attraction. The rejuvenated number-one IBF contender Tate emerged as a title threat late in '97, then strengthened his status by scoring victories over Demetrius Davis, Merqui Sosa, and previously unbeaten Anwar Oshana, all on television.

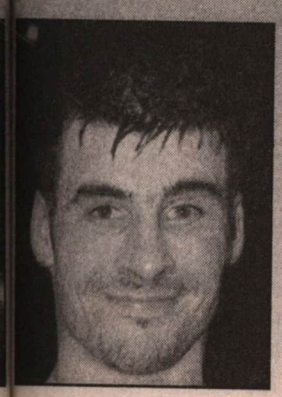
Liles appears to be in limbo. Known almost exclusively by hardcore fans, the tall southpaw spent most of '98 embroiled in a contract dispute with promoter Don King, and at 34 years old, is showing signs his skills are eroding. Woodhall may actually be the best of the three champions, but that doesn't say much.

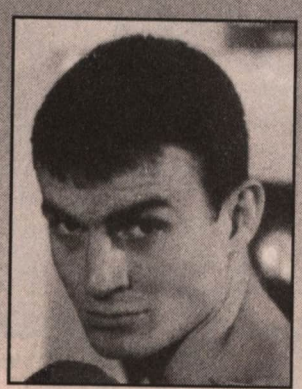
Think About It: The IBF created a super middleweight

LONGEST-REIGNING CHAMPIONS

The following graph displays the game's most established champions, along with the number of consecutive months each has held the title. This year's additions include Saman Sorjaturong, Luisito Espinosa, and Evander Holyfield. Gone from last year are former WBA lightweight champ Orzubek Nazarov, who was unseated, and former WBA welterweight champ Ike Quartey and ex-IBF junior feather titlist Vuyani Bungu, both of whom vacated their titles.




Joe Calzaghe


Richie Woodhall

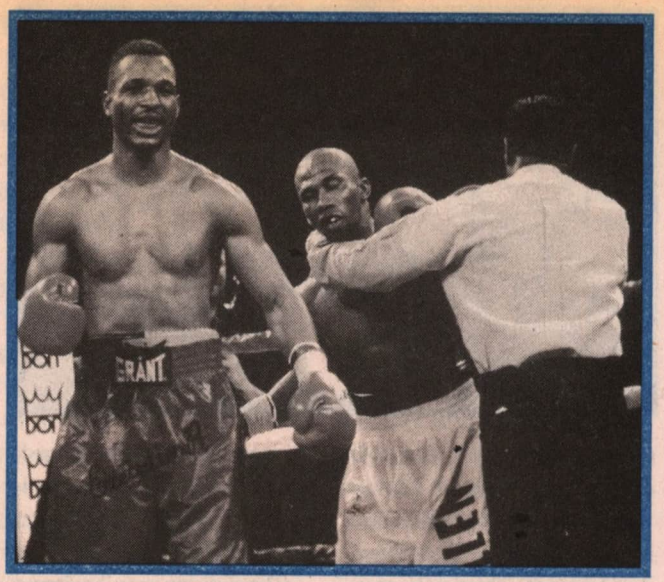
class in 1984, followed by the WBA in '87 and the WBC in '88. In the division's 15 years, current WBA champ Liles has the longest reign of anyone at 168 pounds. Liles won the title on August 12, 1994, beating Steve Little by 12-round decision. He has defended the title seven times, but just once last year.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

The card Don King intended to put on in Washington, D.C., on February 6 of this year, was, in theory, a tremendous step in the right direction. Put all three world titles on the line on the same show, so that even if unification never happens, at least we can get an idea of who the best is by seeing all the top guys at once. Disaster struck when WBA champ William Joppy got in a car accident and WBC titlist Hassine Cherifi injured his back. But we still got our answer. IBF king Bernard Hopkins thrashed Robert Allen in seven rounds, and reminded everyone who the man to beat at 160 pounds is.

But Hopkins is 34 and he won't be around forever. Though the future of this division probably lies in the hands of young junior middles Fernando Vargas and David Reid, there are some capable contenders currently filling out the positions behind "The Executioner." Joppy boasts a solid blend of speed and power, as does former WBC champion Keith Holmes when motivated. Cherifi, though limited, is a gamer. Southpaw Otis Grant looked pathetic against Roy Jones at light heavy, but what middleweight, besides Hopkins, wouldn't? As bad as Allen punked out against Hopkins, he's still shown some talent. Brit Ryan Rhodes has potential, and if you're looking for an upstart to bring excitement to the division, it's kayo artist Antwun Echols.

Think About It: When boxing experts discuss the all-time great trilogies, matchups like Zale-Graziano, Ali-Frazier, and Bowe-Holyfield usually tend to come up. We doubt Joppy-Julio Cesar Green will ever be on that list, but a rubber match is poised to happen soon anyway because Green topped WBA number-one joke Darren Obah to claim the mandatory slot. Does anyone really want to see Joppy-Gree III, after Joppy so easily wo their 1998 rematch? We dou it, but that's all the more reaso to expect it to come off.



Bernard Hopkins stops arch-rival Robert Allen

MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Bernard Hopkins

Best Boxer
Bernard Hopkins

Most Protected
Robert McCracken

Is He Still Around?
Simon Brown

Matchmaker's Dream
Bernard Hopkins-David Reid

Best-Kept Secret
Bert Schenk

Deserves A Title Shot
Antwun Echols

Most Fun To Watch
Antwun Echols

On The Way Down
Peter Venancio

Underrated
Davey Hilton

Best Fight In 1998
Hassine Cherifi W 12
Keith Holmes

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

Best Puncher
David Reid

Best Boxer
Fernando Vargas

Most Protected
Bronco McKart

Is He Still Around?
Anthony Jones

Matchmaker's Dream
Fernando Vargas-David Reid

Best-Kept Secret
Harry Simon

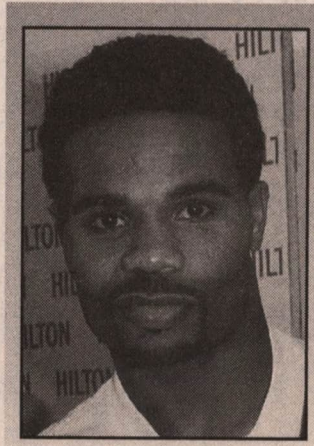
Deserves A Title Shot
Tony Marshall

Most Fun To Watch
Fernando Vargas

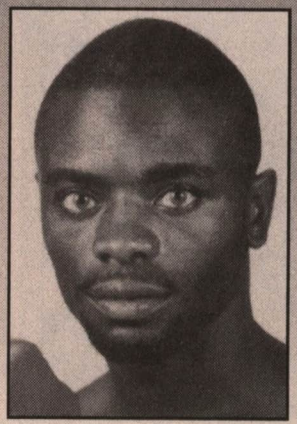
On The Way Down
Keith Mullings

Underrated
Laurent Boudouani

Best Fight In 1998
Tony Marshall KO 11
Anthony Jones



William Joppy



Antwun Echols

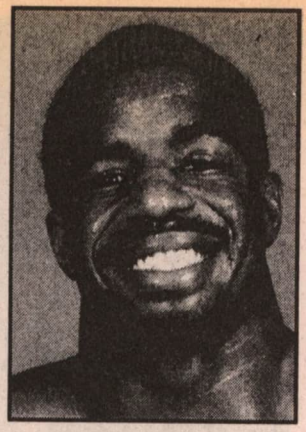
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

When welterweight sta Oscar De La Hoya an Felix Trinidad finally mak their long-anticipated move u to the 154-pound division, the just might find the competitio even fiercer than it was at we terweight. With super talente young studs Fernando Varg (IBF) and David Reid (WBA sitting on two of the thre junior middleweight throne winning titles won't be easy.

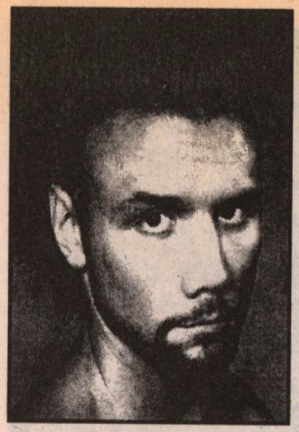
Despite his upset win ov Keith Mullings, WBC titli Francisco Castillejo is th weakest champ in the divisio The Spaniard has already bee defeated twice by Laure

Photo by Chris Farina

Fernando Vargas



David Reid



Bronco McKart

Boudouani, who recently lost the WBA belt to Reid. Speaking of Boudouani, the Frenchman fought well in his decision loss to "The American Dream" and could still be a factor. It doesn't end there. Panama's 6'4" Guillermo Jones (who drew and lost on points in two close title bouts with Boudouani), Namibia's Harry Simon (who beat slick American southpaw Winky Wright), and long-suffering but tenacious Tony Marshall are also difficult propositions. Oscar, Felix, you've got your work cut out for you.

Think About It: The junior middleweight class has come a long way since Emile Griffith first claimed the title back in 1962. Griffith thought so little of the belt, he never even bothered to defend it, and throughout the '60s and '70s, it was considered little more than a minor title, a rest stop for welters on their way to becoming full-fledged middleweights. But starting with Wilfred Benitez in '81, the division suddenly became inundated with marquee names, as Roberto Duran, Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns, Donald Curry, and Terry Norris took turns ruling the 154-pounders. Today, it's one of the hottest divisions in the sport.

WELTERWEIGHTS

Between December '98 and February '99, boxing's most talent-rich division finally started delivering on its promise. James Page vs. Jose Luis Lopez was a scorcher, with Page climbing off the deck to win on points. Oscar De La Hoya vs. Ike Quartey presented one of the most memorable final-round rallies in recent years, with "The Golden Boy" proving his guts against his toughest foe. And Felix Trinidad vs. Pernell Whitaker turned out to be surprisingly entertaining, with Trinidad becoming the first to clearly beat "Sweet Pea."

With all due respect to Page, Quartey, Lopez, and Whitaker, the question of who rules the welters really comes down to De La Hoya and Trinidad. People like to compare this matchup to the first meeting between Ray Leonard and Tommy Hearns, but one difference is that Leonard already had a loss on his record by then, whereas WBC champ De La Hoya and IBF boss Trinidad both sport spotless resumes. This fight is more like a 147-pound version of Muhammad Ali-Joe Frazier I, especially because of the way Trinidad's four years of fighting stiffs prior to facing Whitaker made it seem like he'd been exiled.

If there's a fighter worth mentioning beyond the top six, it's Vernon Forrest, who still has the prospect tag in his seventh year as a pro. Forrest is tall, smooth, and powerful, but Main Events appears content to let De La Hoya, Trinidad, and Quartey move up to 154 before pushing for a title shot.

Think about it: De La Hoya's win over Quartey might actually have been *less* controversial had referee Mitch Halpern stopped it toward the end of the champion's 12th-round barrage. Quartey was taking serious punishment, and though he was keeping his fists pumping, the general opinion had Halpern halted it would have been that, even if it was prema-

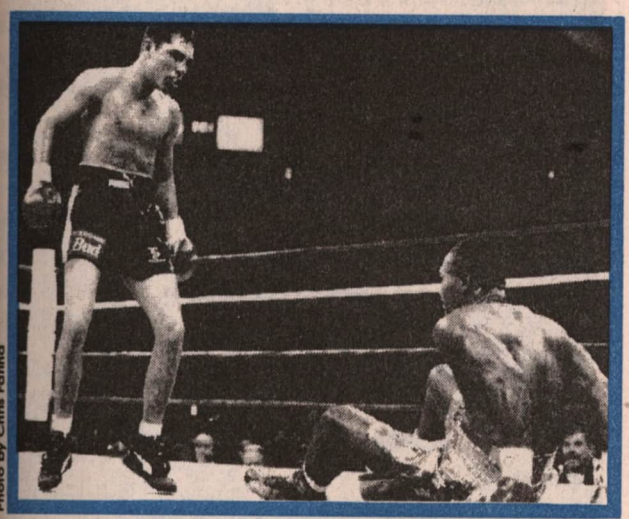


Photo by Chris Farina

Oscar De La Hoya dumps Ike Quartey

WELTERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Oscar De La Hoya

Best Boxer
Oscar De La Hoya

Most Protected
Vernon Forrest

Is He Still Around?
Vincent Pettway

Matchmaker's Dream
Oscar De La Hoya-Felix Trinidad

Best-Kept Secret
Daniel Santos

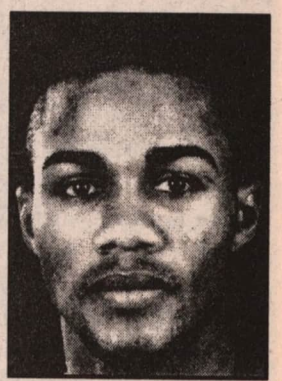
Deserves A Title Shot
Ike Quartey

Most Fun To Watch
Jose Luis Lopez

On The Way Down
Pernell Whitaker

Underrated
Sam Garr

Best Fight In 1998
James Page W 12
Jose Luis Lopez



Felix Trinidad

ture, Oscar had him anyway. Enough people thought Quartey deserved the decision to make this a case where an early stoppage might have made a more conclusive ending.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Two years ago, Kostya Tszyu was supposed to own this division, until he met "Cool" Vince Phillips, sending the weight class into a fog. After a deflated Phillips relinquished the IBF title to hard-hitting Terronn Millett in February, the division was thrown into an even larger funk. Phillips' days as a junior welter are most likely over, as he had to cut close to 50 pounds in a 6½-week period to make weight for the Millett fight.

Zab Judah, the crafty, lightning-quick lefthander from Brooklyn, has emerged as probably the top talent in the division. His title shot may come against Millett, since Judah is the number-one contender in the IBF and will be the first mandatory challenger for the new titlist. He's probably too fast for Millett, and possibly everyone else in the division.

Tszyu is still in the picture as the "interim" WBC champ and was getting ready to fight Miguel Angel Gonzalez for the full title as this magazine was going to press. Sharmba Mitchell, another southpaw, holds the WBA title. Mitchell already owns a victory over Millett, but that occurred early in Millett's career (his 13th fight). Mitchell has some power, but is also susceptible to the right hand. In his first title defense against Pedro Saiz in February, Mitchell was tagged a number of times with the right, and if Saiz had more steam behind his blows, Mitchell could have been in trouble. All signs point to Judah becoming the top dog at 140 by the end of '99, and his greatest challenge coming when lightweight champ Shane Mosley moves up.

Think About It: The division has undergone a major facelift since last year. Phillips was rated number one, and Millett, Mitchell, and Judah were not ranked at all. It shows the division is getting younger. Hector Lopez and Rafael Ruelas are out, and ancient Julio Cesar Chavez dropped from third to eighth.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Kostya Tszyu

Best Boxer
Zab Judah

Most Protected
Reggie Green

Is He Still Around?
Fred Pendleton

Matchmaker's Dream
Sharmba Mitchell-Zab Judah

Best-Kept Secret
Antonio Diaz

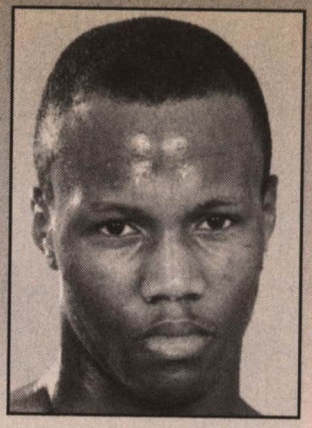
Deserves A Title Shot
Zab Judah

Most Fun To Watch
Kostya Tszyu

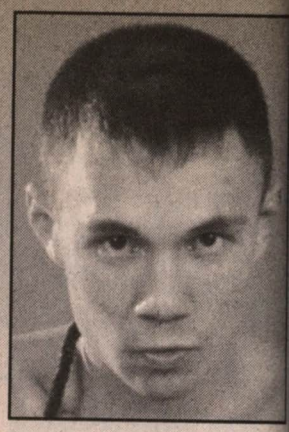
On The Way Down
Julio Cesar Chavez

Underrated
Cory Spinks

Best Fight In 1998
Kostya Tszyu KO 5 Diobelys Hurtado



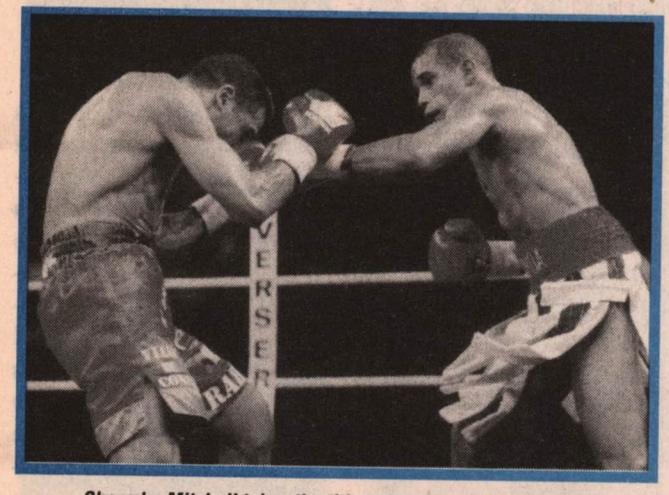
Zab Judah



Kostya Tszyu

LIGHTWEIGHTS

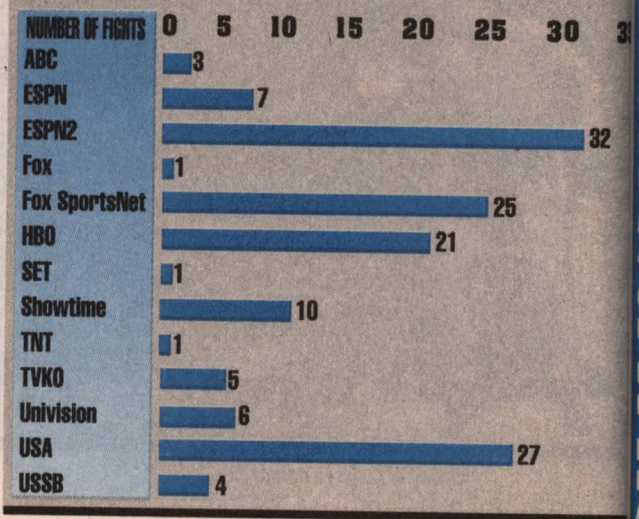
Boxing historians will probably look back on 1998 as the year that IBF champion Sugar Shane Mosley established his credentials as a future Hall of Famer. It doesn't get much better than five knockout victories in five title defenses. True, none of the

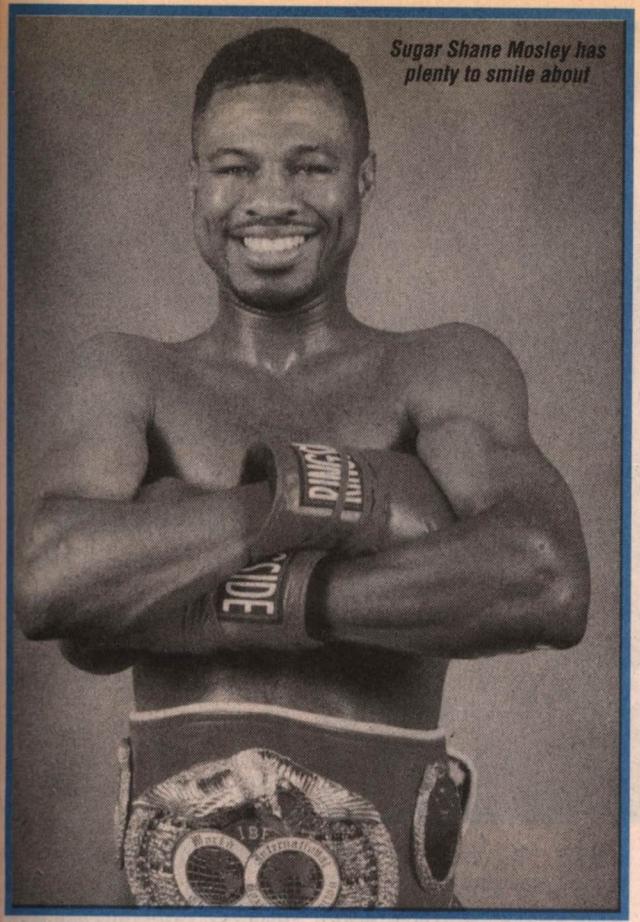


Sharmba Mitchell takes the title away from Khalid Rahilou

BOXING ON TV

Yes, boxing on free network television is getting closer and closer to becoming extinct, but the sport is very much alive and well on cable. Overall, there were 143 cards broadcast in 1998, which translates into over 500 fights. Here's a breakdown:





Sugar Shane Mosley has plenty to smile about

LIGHTWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Shane Mosley

Best Boxer
Shane Mosley

Most Protected
Renato Cornett

Is He Still Around?
Orzubek Nazarov

Matchmaker's Dream
Shane Mosley-Stevie Johnston

Best-Kept Secret
Colin Dunne

Deserves A Title Shot
Ivan Robinson

Most Fun To Watch
Arturo Gatti

On The Way Down
Phillip Holiday

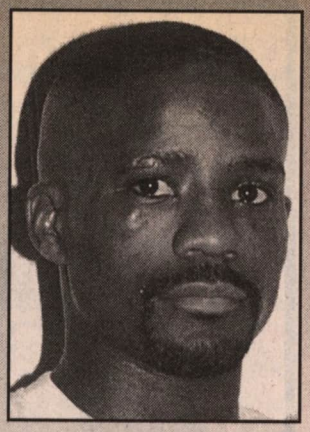
Underrated
Billy Schwer

Best Fight In 1998
Ivan Robinson W 10
Arturo Gatti (First Fight)

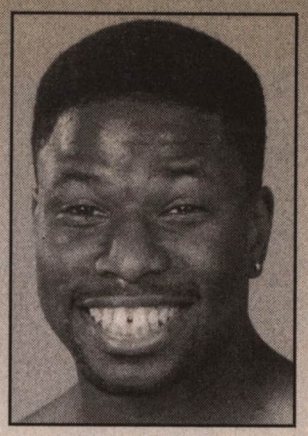
men who challenged him were considered great fighters themselves, but the elegant manner in which Mosley dispatched them clearly demonstrated just how sweet the Sweet Science can be when a true artist is at work.

But even though Mosley would be heavily favored to beat any 135-pounder in the world, there are still some intriguing matches to be made. Foremost among those worthy of sharing a ring with Mosley is WBC champ Steve Johnston, who recently regained the belt he'd lost to Cesar Bazan. Although Johnston's not a banger, if any 135-pounder can equal Mosley in the skill department, it's "Li'l But Bad."

A unification between Mosley and WBA kingpin Jean-Baptiste Mendy is less likely. The Frenchman means next to nothing at the box office in this country, and his spoiling style is hardly conducive to entertaining fights.



Steve Johnston



Ivan Robinson

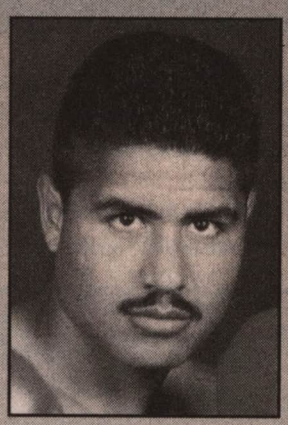
Among the best of the rest is left hooker Israel Cardona. But "Pito" has already turned down an opportunity to challenge Mosley, admitting he'd rather try his luck with then-WBC champ Bazan. So don't expect an upset if Mosley and Cardona eventually clash.

Think About It: Has there been a lightweight in recent memory who has turned his career around as dramatically as Ivan Robinson? The Philadelphian was considered washed-up after Cardona flattened him in 1997, but bounced back with a pair of thrilling wins over Arturo Gatti in '98, and will get a crack at Mosley, providing he beats Angel Manfredy on April 17.

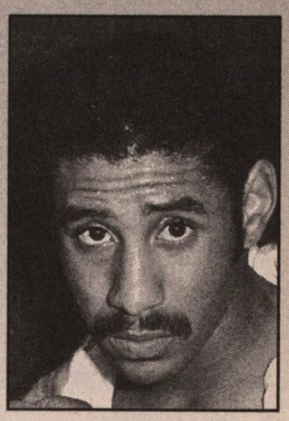
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

This division experienced a stellar year in '98, thanks in large part to the emergence of Floyd Mayweather, the 22-year-old from Grand Rapids, Michigan. All the former Olympian did was become THE RING's Fighter of the Year by destroying the best the 130-pound class had to offer. He won the title with an eighth-round kayo of Genaro Hernandez (who was forced into retirement by the loss), then smoked Angel Manfredy in two rounds. Mayweather is fearless, has a quicksilver fighting style, and possesses a smile that radiates tons of charisma.

The division does pose some challenges for Mayweather. IBF champion Roberto Garcia is an excellent boxer, but he cannot equal the hand speed of Mayweather. Japan's Takanori Hatakeyama, the WBA champ, has some power, scoring 16 knockouts in



Roberto Garcia



Diego Corrales

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Floyd Mayweather

Best Boxer
Floyd Mayweather

Most Protected
Joel Casamayor

Is He Still Around?
Harold Warren

Matchmaker's Dream
Floyd Mayweather-Roberto Garcia

Best-Kept Secret
John Brown

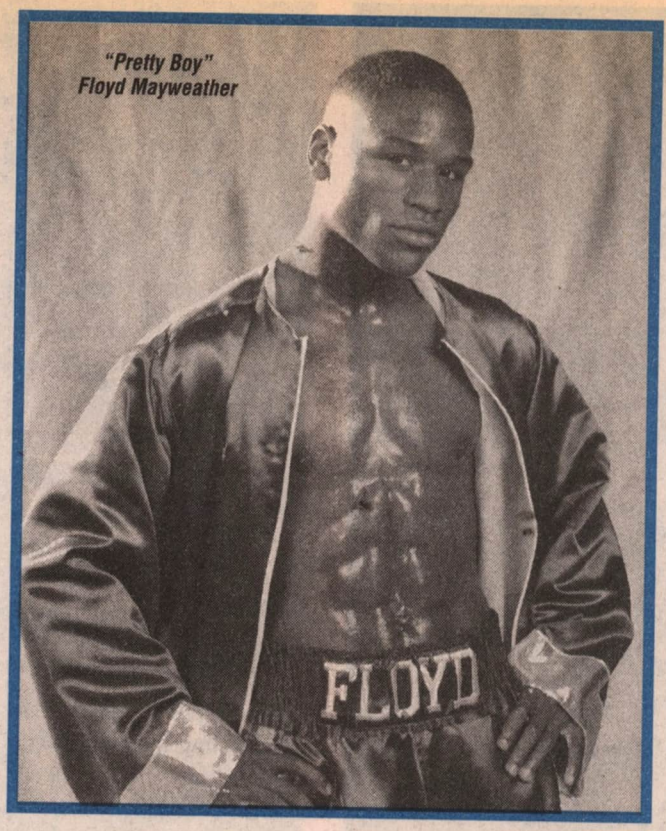
Deserves A Title Shot
Diego Corrales

Most Fun To Watch
Floyd Mayweather

On The Way Down
John-John Molina

Underrated
Saul Duran

Best Fight In 1998
Roberto Garcia KO 5 Ramon Ledon



"Pretty Boy" Floyd Mayweather

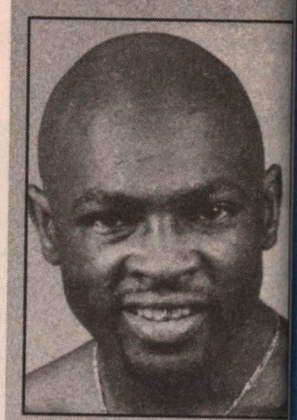
his first 20 fights, but he too may not be able to keep up with Mayweather's blazing punches.

The rest of the division may not make anyone quake in their shoes, but there is some talent. Veteran John Brown stepped up in '98, losing a close decision to Manfredy, then coming back on short notice to knock out Gabriel Ruelas. Lean and powerful Diego Corrales is a young fighter worth watching. He may get his first title shot against Garcia. South Korea's Yong Soo Choi and Kazakhstan's Anatoly Alexandrov are among the best fighters Americans hardly hear anything about. And Manfredy, despite his setback against Mayweather, is still a factor in this division.

Think About It: Remember Jesus Chavez, the Mexican 130-pounder Main Events featured on so many of its shows in 1997? Well, as you probably know, he was deported because of legal di culties. At first, Main Eve thought Chavez would be b fighting north of the border i few months, but apparen not. United States immigrat officials determined Chav originally entered the coun illegally and to date have permitted him to re-ent Chavez is still fighting—a winning—in Mexico, but do expect to see him statesi anytime soon.

FEATHERWEIGHTS

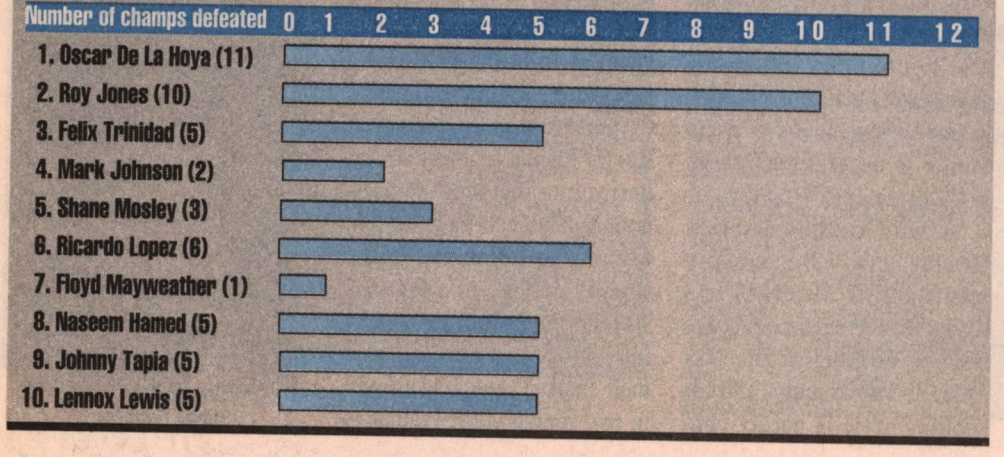
In a way, 1998 was a wast year for Naseem Hame Sure, the division's bigge attraction added a few mo million to his already bulgi bank account with wins ov ancient Wilfredo Vazquez a outgunned Wayne McCu lough, but compared to th whirlwind of excitement h created in '97, the past ye was a resounding dud. Pa ticularly disappointing wa

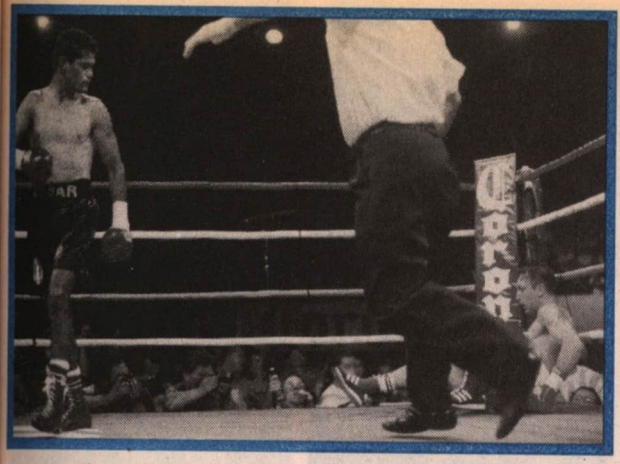

Fred Norwood

Naseem Hamed

CHAMPS vs. CHAMPS

One of the best ways to determine a champion's worth is to count the number of other world champions he's defeated. Looking here at how THE RING'S pound-for-pound entrants stack up in that department, you'll notice our top two really stand apart as the best:





Cesar Soto decks Carlos Rios in featherweight brawl

narcissistic Naz' hit-and-run performance against McCullough in Atlantic City, especially compared to "The Prince's" sensational U.S. debut against Kevin Kelley. Even so, the flamboyant Anglo-Arab is still the only 126-pounder capable of creating multimillion-dollar gates, and without him, the division would be nowhere near as much fun.

A lot of fans would like to see Hamed tackle WBC champion Luisito Espinosa, who boosted his own stock by blasting out Kennedy McKinney. But the WBO, whose bogus belt Naz wears, has made Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez the mandatory challenger, which is not necessarily a bad thing. Marquez is a highly competent fighter, and should give Naz a much tougher tussle than either Vazquez or McCullough.

WBA titlist Antonio Cermeno is an accomplished boxer, but lacks punching power. Ditto for ancient IBF champ Manuel Medina, who was stopped by Hamed in '96.

Think About It: Just as everybody was starting to get excited about then-WBA champion Fred Norwood, he ate himself out of the title, losing it on the scales, despite stopping challenger Keiji Matsumoto in the 10th. Let's hope that "Little Hagler" can learn a little discipline, because just like his namesake, he's a hard-punching, no-nonsense pug—just the sort who could give Hamed fits.

FEATHERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Naseem Hamed

Best Boxer
Vuyani Bungu

Most Protected
Antonio Cermeno

Is He Still Around?
Billy Hardy

Matchmaker's Dream
Naseem Hamed-Erik Morales

Best-Kept Secret
Angel Vazquez (still)

Deserves A Title Shot
Juan Manuel Marquez

Most Fun To Watch
Naseem Hamed

On The Way Down
Hector Lizarraga

Underrated
Cesar Soto

Best Fight In 1998
Cesar Soto W 10
Carlos Rios

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

The trouble with the 122-pound division is that every good fighter in it wants to add four pounds and fight featherweight money machine Naseem Hamed. And while that's understandable, it's also somewhat of a shame, because there are some excellent matchups to be made within the junior feather ranks.

WBC titlist Erik Morales had a breakthrough year in 1998, thanks to his HBO-televised demolition of Junior Jones, and has emerged as one of boxing's brightest news stars. He'll test his strength as a pay-per-view attraction against Wayne McCullough on May 8, and assuming he gets past the former WBC bantam champ in good shape, even greater paydays await.

One of those paydays could come against Marco Antonio Barrera, who tallied four comeback victories in '98. Barrera seems fully recovered from his two losses to Jones, and is still very popular with Mexican and Mexican-American fans. In fact, Morales-Barrera would be a bigger fight south of the border than either of the two Mexicans versus Naz.

After tallying 13 successful title defenses, brilliant IBF boss Vuyani Bungu has decided to relinquish the belt and go after Hamed. Somehow, the South African has jumped to the head of the queue, and is expected to meet Naz this summer.

If new WBA king Nestor Garza, another Mexican, beats undefeated Venezuelan Carlos Barreto on the Morales-

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Erik Morales

Best Boxer
Erik Morales

Most Protected
Michael Brodie

Is He Still Around?
Jesus Salud

Matchmaker's Dream
Erik Morales-Marco Antonio Barrera

Best-Kept Secret
Carlos Navarro

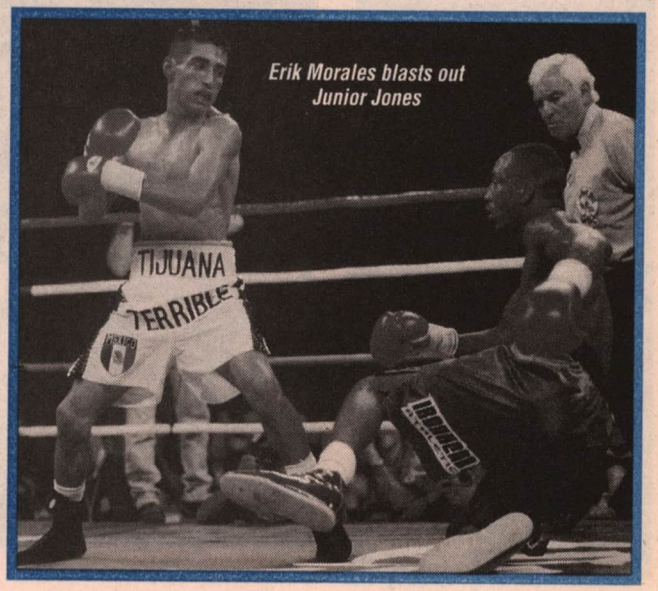
Deserves A Title Shot
Marco Antonio Barrera

Most Fun To Watch
Erik Morales

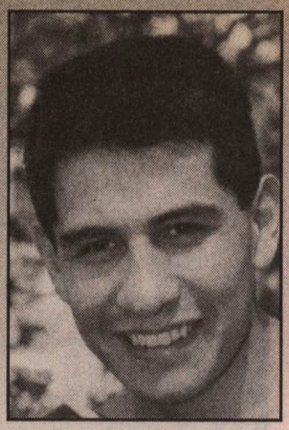
On The Way Down
Kennedy McKinney

Underrated
Aristead Clayton

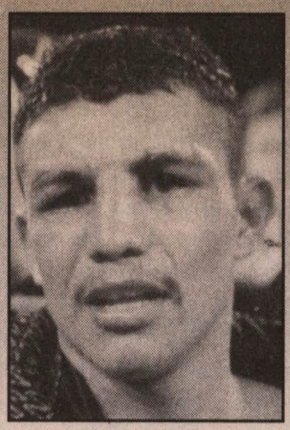
Best Fight In 1998
Nestor Garza W 12
Enrique Sanchez



Erik Morales blasts out Junior Jones



Marco Antonio Barrera



Nestor Garza

McCullough show, he could also become an drawing card, thanks to his give-and-take brand of action.

Think About It: This time last year, Jones and Kennedy McKinney were considered forces in the division. Now, neither are a factor. Jones has moved up to the 130-pound class, and the 33-year-old McKinney, following a brief flirtation in the featherweight division, where he suffered an emphatic kayo loss to WBC champ Luisito Espinosa, looks a loss or two away from retirement.

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Johnny Tapia's entry into the bantamweight class makes things a little more interesting. Tapia captured the WBA title with a 12-round victory over Nana Konadu in December. He joins current champions Tim Austin (IBF) and Veerapol Sahaprom (WBC), to make an appealing trio. Tapia has said he would like to get a crack at Austin and the IBF belt, but a recent snag could prevent that from happening. Austin and Tapia were once both promoted by Don King, but now with Tapia switching promoters, it's anyone's guess if that unification bout will come off.

While Tapia adds star power to the division, it's Austin who is probably the best of the class. He has quickness and punching power, plus he answered any questions about his grit when he came back to win the IBF title from long-time champ Mbulelo Botile, overcoming a broken jaw to do it. What Austin lacks is the marquee name. He may need Tapia more than Tapia needs him. Another option for Austin is King-promoted Jorge Eliecer Julio.

So where Tapia and Austin's possibilities for a big fight may be somewhat limited, Sahaprom's alternatives appear to be broader. The Thai fighter won the WBC title from Joichiro Tatsuyoshi, who is Japan's answer to Arturo Gatti, back in December. Sahaprom could give the popular Tatsuyoshi a rematch, or face impressive mandatory challenger Adan Vargas, the younger brother of former WBC featherweight champion Goyo.

BANTAMWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Tim Austin

Best Boxer
Johnny Tapia

Most Protected
Marcus Oscar Garro

Is He Still Around?
John Michael Johnson

Matchmaker's Dream
Tim Austin-Johnny Tapia

Best-Kept Secret
Adan Vargas

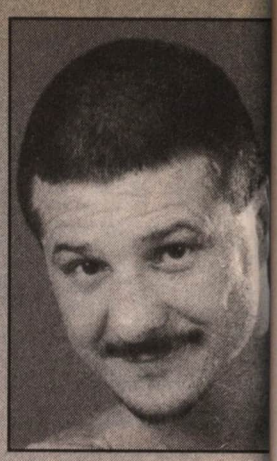
Deserves A Title Shot
Adan Vargas

Most Fun To Watch
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi

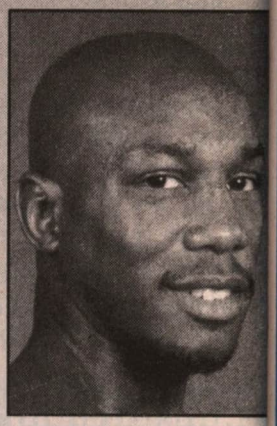
On The Way Down
Nana Konadu

Underrated
Paulie Ayala

Best Fight In 1998
Veerapol Sahaprom KO 6
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi

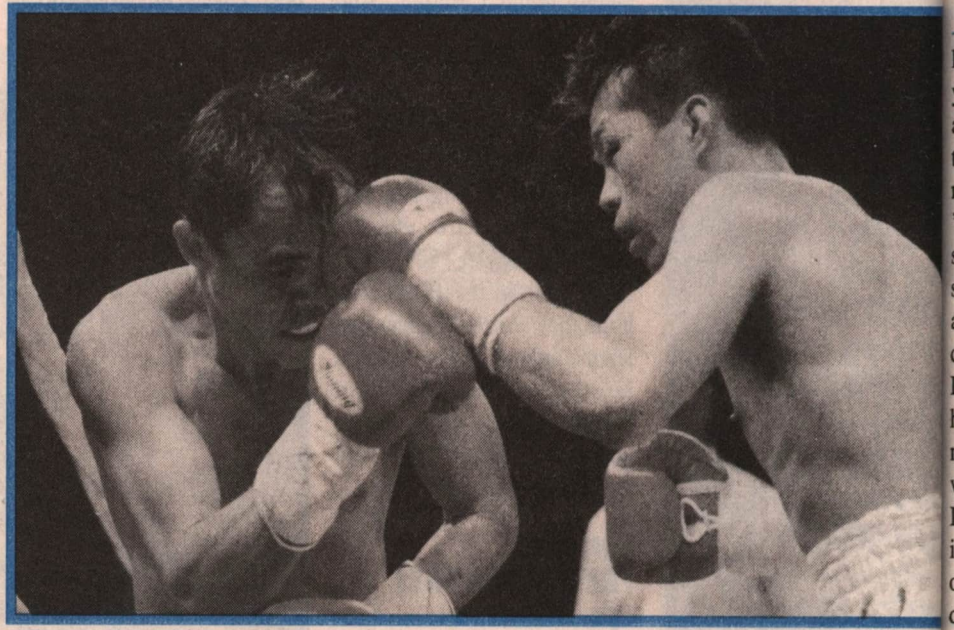


Johnny Tapia



Tim Austin

Think About It: Hop
fully, Tapia can hold on to t
WBA bantamweight title f
more than a year. But it wo
be easy, since that title see
to be jinxed. It has chang



Joichiro Tatsuyoshi hooks Noe Santilla

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Mark Johnson

Best Boxer
Mark Johnson

Most Protected
Luis Bolano

Is He Still Around?
David Griman

Matchmaker's Dream
Mark Johnson-Eric Morel

Best-Kept Secret
Pedro Pena

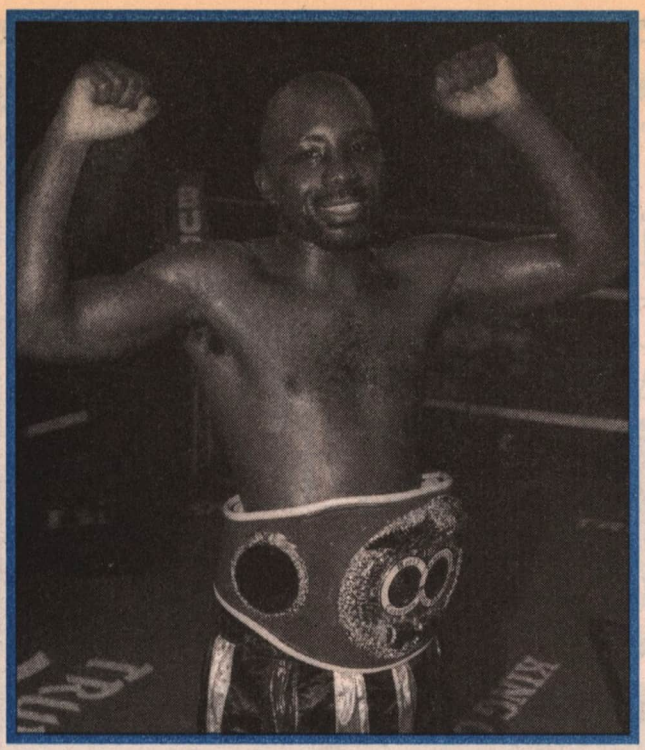
Deserves A Title Shot
Gerry Penalosa

Most Fun To Watch
Mark Johnson

On The Way Down
Rodolfo Blanco

Underrated
Victor Godoy

Best Fight In 1998
Satoshi Iida W 12 Julio Gamboa



Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson

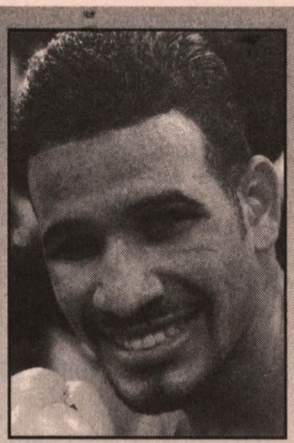
hands at least once every year since 1991, and has had nine different owners this decade.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

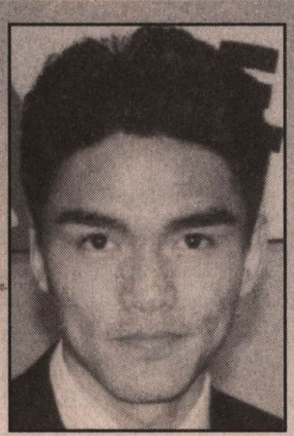
Mark Johnson just can't seem to get it right. If he had moved up to 115 pounds a year earlier, and been immediately ranked number-one by the IBF as he was when he made the leap at the tail end of '98, he might have gotten his shot at Johnny Tapia. If he had stayed put at flyweight for another year, maybe he could've convinced Ricardo Lopez, who should be making his 108-pound debut this summer, to come up one more weight class and fight him. Instead, Tapia's gone, Lopez isn't happening, and Johnson's once again poised to rule a division without a single capable contender. As we went to press, Johnson was slated to face Ratanachai Dutchboy Gym for the vacant IBF title.

WBC champ In Joo Cho of Korea, perhaps the most unexciting fighter ever to hold a world title, is so opposed to action that his ring entrance music ought to just be a "Boring!" chant. WBA titlist Jesus "Kiki" Rojas is way past his prime, and only holds a title because Satoshi Iida, who has since retired, injured his shoulder early in their December '98 title bout. Gerry Penalosa, the man Cho beat for the title, is a stronger threat to Johnson than the two champions, but he still isn't in "Too Sharp's" league. If anyone at 115 poses a challenge to Johnson, it's '96 Olympian Eric Morel, whose awesome showing last September against Rodolfo Blanco on ESPN2 opened a lot of eyes.

Think About It: When the International Boxing Hall of Fame opens it doors to the Class of '99 this June, it will be inducting its first junior bantamweight champion, Khaosai Galaxy. The dominant Thailander won the WBA belt in 1984 and retired as champion seven years later, having made a division record 19 successful defenses. The only other 115-pound titlist to break into double digits in consecutive defenses was Japan's Jiro Watanabe, who retained the WBA/WBC belts 11 straight times in the early-'80s. Galaxy's amazing career record of 49-1 (43) includes a mark of 20-0 (17) in title fights.



Eric Morel



Satoshi Iida

FLYWEIGHTS

When Mark Johnson decided to vacate the IBF belt, that left the division devoid of a champion who had name value. He brought a little of everything to the division, but mainly he brought attention with the potential for decent paydays. Johnson dominated the class last year. He crushed a good opponent in Arthur Johnson in one round, then was criticized for showboating in a July victo-

FLYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Mauricio Pastrana

Best Boxer
Manny Pacquiao

Most Protected
Irene Pacheco

Is He Still Around?
Hugo Soto

Matchmaker's Dream
Mauricio Pastrana-Chatchai Dutchboy Gym

Best-Kept Secret
Mike Trejo

Deserves A Title Shot
Mauricio Pastrana

Most Fun To Watch
Mauricio Pastrana

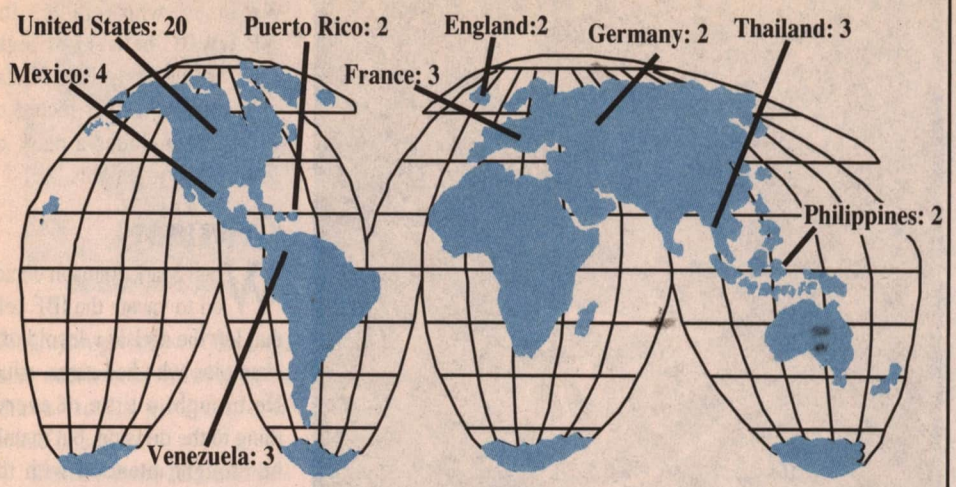
On The Way Down
Carlos Salazar

Underrated
Alejandro Montiel

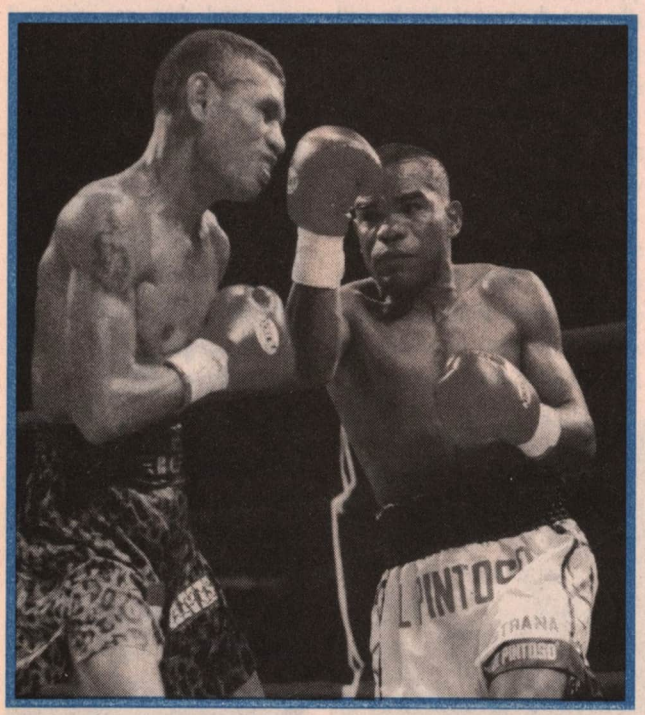
Best Fight In 1998
Hugo Soto W 12 Jose Bonilla

THE CHAMPS BY COUNTRIES

The United States continues to lead the rest of the world in champions, even though its total decreased by one from last year. (Champions as of March 24, 1999.)



Five countries tied with 1: • South Africa • Puerto Rico • South Korea • Spain • Japan



Mauricio Pastrana rips into Anis Roga

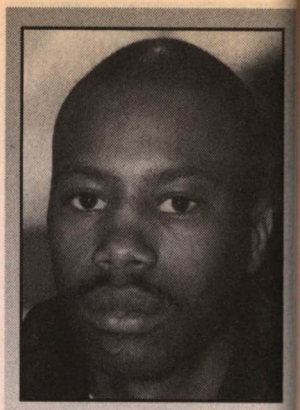
ry over Luis Rolon. "Too Sharp" finished out the year with a sixth-round knockout of Jose Laureano, but experienced some trouble dropping the weight, and felt it was in his best interest to surrender the IBF belt and move up. All three title defenses were televised.

Don't expect too many TV cameras flashing at anyone out of this class in the near future. The two champions in the division are Manny Pacquiao (WBC), from the Philippines, and Leo Gamez (WBA) of Venezuela; neither are household names to American boxing fans. Gamez was a victim of bad scheduling when he beat Hugo Soto for the WBA title in the opening bout on the Evander Holyfield-Lennox Lewis undercard at Madison Square Garden in front of maybe 1,000 people. Things will not get any better, with Frenchman David Guerault a favorite over Colombia's Irene Pacheco to win the IBF belt vacated by Johnson. The shame of it is exciting fighters like Colombia's Mauricio Pastrana and Thailand's Chatchai Dutchboy Gym go unnoticed because they lack title belts and quality opponents.

Think About It: The 70-year-old record for the quickest flyweight title fight, held by Spider Pladner's 58-second knockout of Frankie Genaro in Paris in 1929, nearly fell in 1998. Mark Johnson's wipeout of Arthur Johnson in Washington, D.C., took just 13 seconds more.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

WBC champion Saman Sorjaturong's dominance at 108 pounds could be



Will Grigsby

in jeopardy as soon as WBC WBA strawweight champion Ricardo Lopez recovers from surgery to repair his right eyelid. Even though Lopez stopped the Thailander back in '93, this is still a superfight between two of the smallest and most talented fighters in the sport,

Waiting for the winner wil

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Saman Sorjaturong

Best Boxer
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat

Most Protected
Baby Jake Matlala

Is He Still Around?
Melchor Cob Castro

Matchmaker's Dream
Saman Sorjaturong-Ricardo Lopez

Best-Kept Secret
Will Grigsby

Deserves A Title Shot
Rosendo Alvarez

Most Fun To Watch
Rosendo Alvarez

On The Way Down
Ratanapol Sor Vorapin

Underrated
Jorge Arce

Best Fight In 1998
Saman Sorjaturong W 12 Ladislao Vazquez

Saman Sorjaturong

be former WBA 105-pound champ Rosendo Alvarez, who gave Lopez the two toughest fights of his career. The hard-hitting Nicaraguan has already abandoned the strawweight class, and providing he can keep his weight under control, is good enough to give any 108-pounder nightmares.

In terms of talent, Thailand's Pichitnoi C. Siriwat seems to be a notch or so below Sorjaturong, Lopez, and Alvarez, but he's already tallied four defenses of the WBA title, and if he continues to fight in his native land, will probably the keep belt a while longer.

The rest of the pack—Baby Jake Matlala, Melchor Cob Castro, Jorge Arce—are all competent performers, and would match up well with any of the titlists.

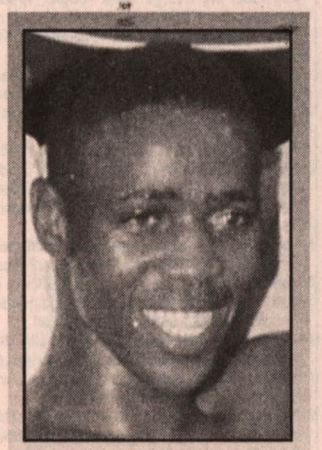
Think About It: In an era when Latinos and Asians dominate boxing's lightest divisions, African-American Will Grigsby is an anomaly. The St. Paul, Minnesota, boxer seemingly came out of nowhere to win the vacant IBF title with a unanimous 12-round decision over former IBF mini fly champ Ratanapol Sor Vorapin in December. A few years ago, Grigsby was so frustrated by the way his career had bogged down, he almost quit boxing. Now he joins Michael Carbajal as one of only two Americans to wear the 108-pound belt.

STRAWWEIGHTS

For eight long years, boxing fans wondered who was going to step up and challenge Ricardo Lopez, make him earn his pound-for-pound status. On March 7, 1998, they finally got what they'd been asking for. Rosendo Alvarez knocked Lopez down for the first time in his career, and may have been on his way to victory when the fight was stopped due to cuts. The result was a technical draw, so "Finito," his spotless record ruined, demanded a rematch. And when the two tiny warriors went at it again on November 13, it was one of the greatest slugouts in the history of the 105-pound division, with Lopez capturing a hard-earned, bloody decision.

But after one great year in which the strawweight class became meaningful even in America, it's back to a bunch of Thailanders, Filipinos, and Mexicans engaging in fights we'll never see here. Alvarez can't make 105 anymore, and Lopez, who underwent surgery on his right eyelid in February, will be moving up to 108 pounds over the summer before possibly retiring by the end of the year. Nobody can fill the void left by Lopez' departure, but those who are going to try include tough southpaw IBF champ Zolani Petelo of South Africa, teenaged Thailander Wandee Chor Chareon, and the brothers Porpaoin, former WBA champ Chana and new WBA interim champ Songkram.

Think About It: Believe it or not, even at strawweight there are journeymen. One who stands out is Randy Villamor of the Philippines, whose record stands at 6-20-1 with no career kayo victories. Though only half the size of Marion Wilson, his list of conquerors is almost as depressingly impressive: Myung Sup Park (KO by 2), Rocky Palma (KO by 1), Jun Arlos (KO by 4), Carmelo Caceres (L 8, KO by 6), Eric Jamili (KO by 4), and Young Soon Chang (KO by 1). Villamor has won just once in his last 17 fights. ■



Zolani Petelo

STRAWWEIGHT

Best Puncher
Ricardo Lopez

Best Boxer
Ricardo Lopez

Most Protected
Daniel Reyes

Is He Still Around?
Ronnie Magramo

Matchmaker's Dream
Ricardo Lopez-Zolani Petelo

Best-Kept Secret
Jose Aguirre

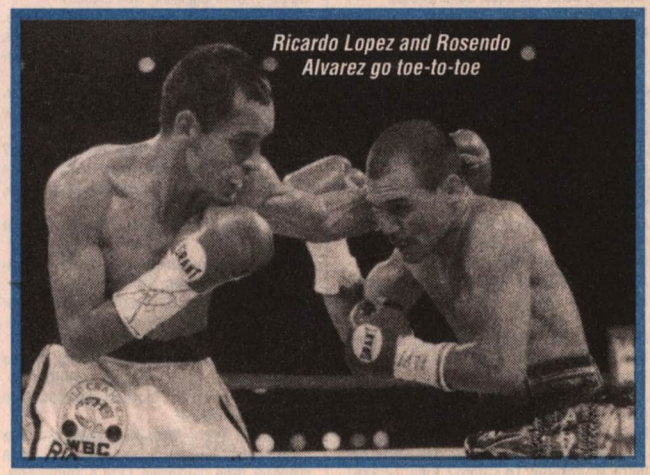
Deserves A Title Shot
Edgar Cardenas

Most Fun To Watch
Ricardo Lopez

On The Way Down
Rocky Lin

Underrated
Kermin Guardia

Best Fight In 1998
Ricardo Lopez W 12
Rosendo Alvarez



Ricardo Lopez and Rosendo Alvarez go toe-to-toe

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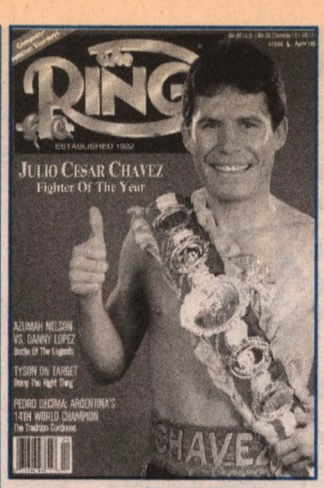

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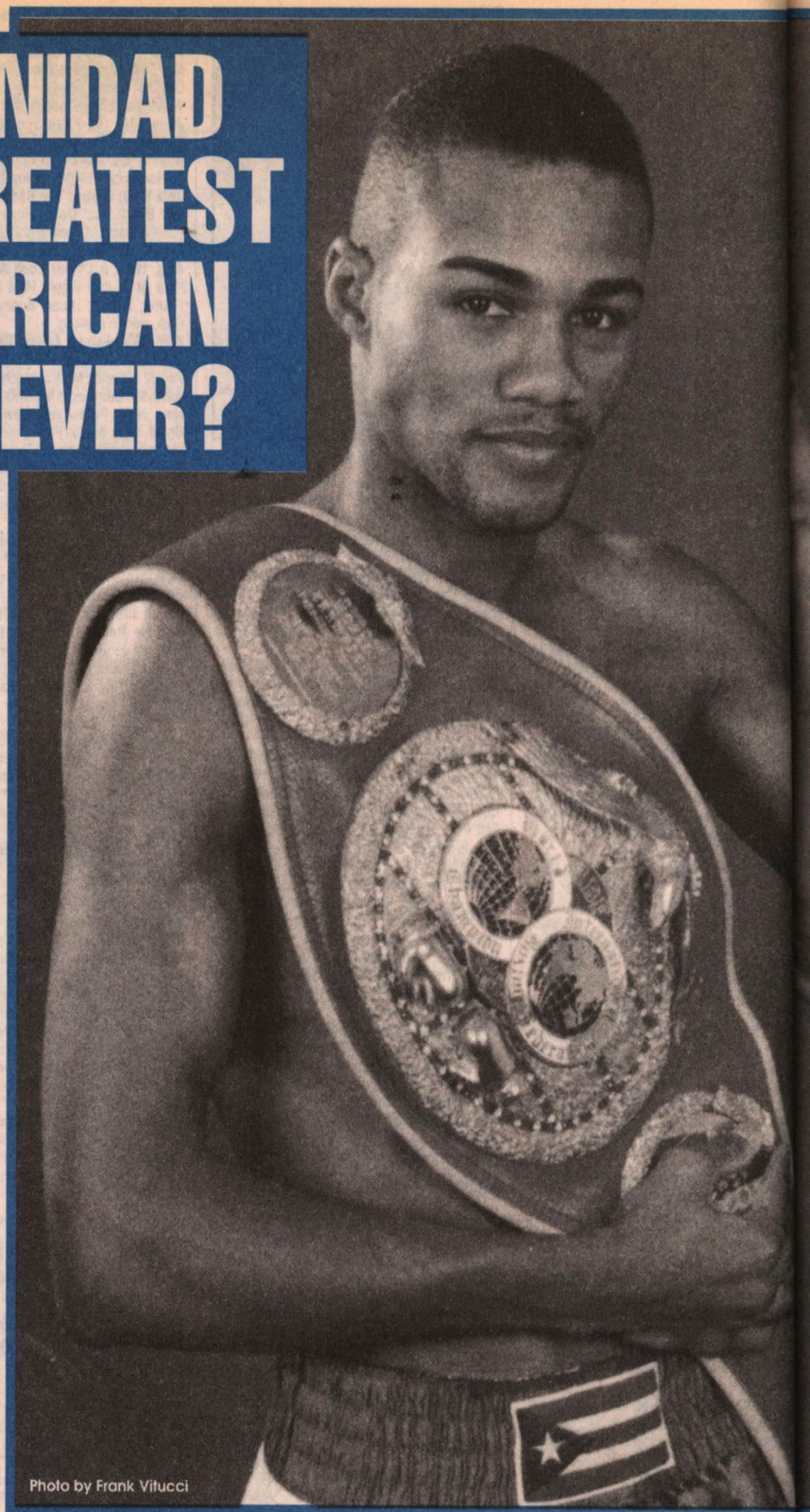


Photo by Frank Vitucci

By D.E. Thomas

Judging a fighter's career at a time when he may not have even reached his peak is like trying to compare Mark McGwire's accomplishments to those of Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron. We have a full body of work from yesteryear's home run kings to judge them by, while McGwire is still a work in progress. He is coming off an incredible season, but his place in history won't be fully known until he's shown what he can do for an entire career.

Such is the case when trying to figure where Felix Trinidad ranks at this point in his development. He is certainly among the top welterweights of today, and his 12-round domination of Pernell Whitaker only adds to his growing legend. At age 26, his best may still be ahead of him, so any definitive conclusion at this point would be premature.

That doesn't mean we can't try to put some perspective on his accomplishments to date. With a 34-0 (29) record, Trinidad has already earned a spot among the all-time great fighters from of Puerto Rico, a nation with a rich boxing history. It is certainly no stretch to say that Trinidad is by far the best fighter his country has produced in many years, and he towers over the relatively thin ranks of world-class Puerto Rican pugilists on the scene today.

Among Puerto Rican fighters of recent vintage, only featherweight Wilfredo Vazquez has compiled a resume worthy of

comparison. He had a brief run as WBA bantamweight champion, made nine successful defenses of the super bantamweight crown after stepping up in weight and winning the title from Raul Perez, and then moved up again to take WBA honors in the featherweight ranks. He defended that title four times before he was outclassed by Naseem Hamed, but at age 38, Vazquez was far past his prime by that time.

While Vazquez deserves credit for a long and successful career spanning nearly two decades and 50 victories, it should also be considered that he lost his first try for a world title, dropping a decision to Miguel "Happy" Lora, and lost by first-round knockout to Israel Contreras between his first and second title runs. Three top-level fighters—Khaokor Galaxy at bantamweight, Antonio Cermeno at 122 pounds, and Hamed at featherweight—handed him his other defeats in title fights. While none of those losses are shameful, Vazquez never quite seemed to come up big in the big fights.

Current contenders like fellow welterweight Wilfredo Rivera and junior featherweight Angel Chacon are a long way from Trinidad's league in terms of ability and popularity. While Trinidad is a proven winner at the world-class level, the others are still trying to make a mark. In fact, Trinidad has reached a level of celebrity in his homeland that hasn't been seen for years. His popularity among Puerto Ricans today is closer to that generated by Wilfredo Gomez years ago. If "Tito" continues on his present course and is able to dethrone Oscar De La Hoya, his

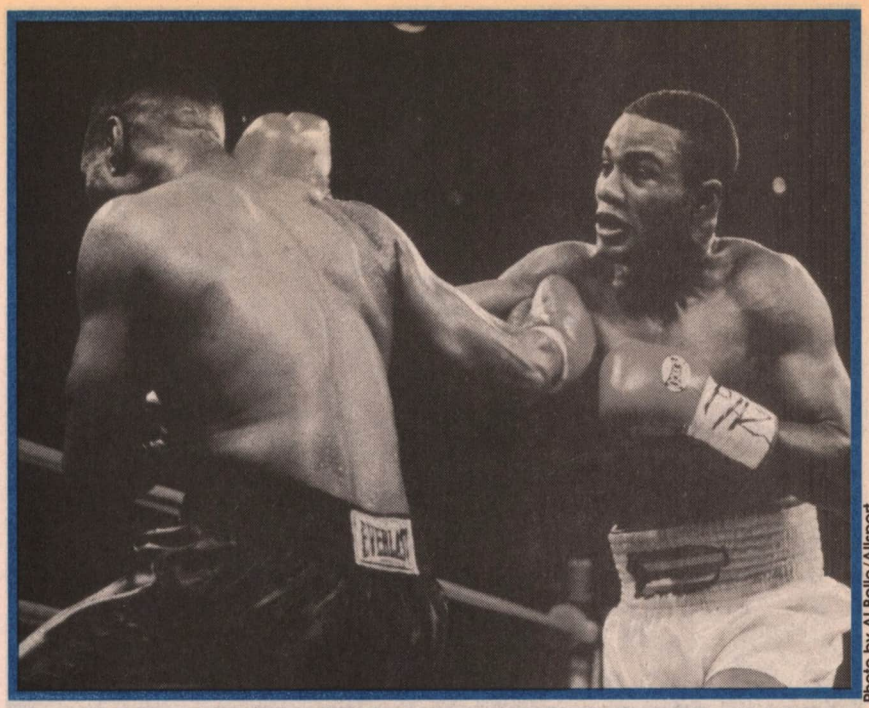
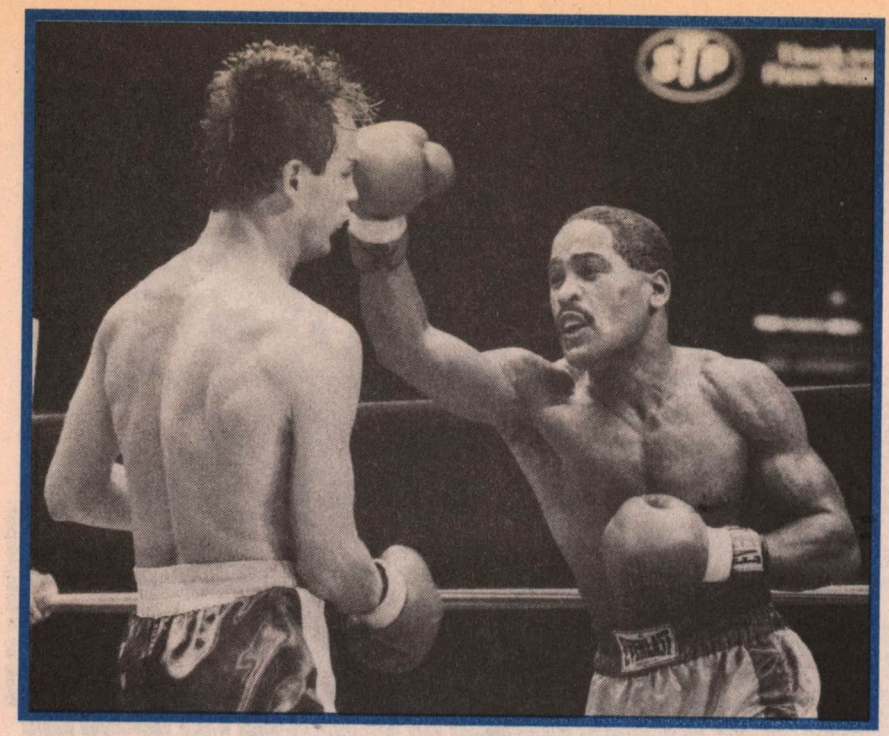


Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

Trinidad cemented his position as one of today's very best welterweights with a convincing points win over Pernell Whitaker at Madison Square Garden. What "Tito" does over the remainder of his career will determine the IBF champion's ultimate place among Puerto Rican fighters.

Trinidad has already defeated one Puerto Rican great in Hector Camacho, winning a one-sided decision over "The Macho Man" in 1994 in defense of the IBF belt.



Wilfred Benitez was already on the way down by the time he outpointed Kevin Moley (pictured) in 1985. The brilliant Puerto Rican boxer was only 17 years old when he beat Antonio Cervantes for the WBA junior welterweight title in '76, and went on to win welter and junior middle belts as well.

popularity may even rival that of his nation's top all-time sports hero, baseball great Roberto Clemente.

While De La Hoya is popular with American fans, particularly teen-age girls, he isn't revered in Mexico, the land from which he draws his heritage. Trinidad, on the other hand, is arguably the most well-liked athlete in Puerto Rico today. While De La Hoya drew nearly 50,000 paying fans for a ho-hum title defense against Patrick Charpentier in El Paso, Texas, proving himself as a major draw in any arena, Trinidad showed his fame at home by luring more than 10,000 customers to see him whack out unknown Mahenge Zulu. That most of those fans seemed to find their way into the ring after the fray, causing it to collapse, is a measure of how many people wanted to be a part of the Trinidad experience.

No one questions that Trinidad belongs at the top of any list of current Puerto Rican boxers, but trying to figure his place in his country's ring history is a more difficult matter. By the time he is done with his work in the ring, Trinidad may even rank as the island country's all-time greatest pugilist, but even if he were to suddenly announce his retirement tomorrow, he would still have a secure place in his homeland's boxing history.

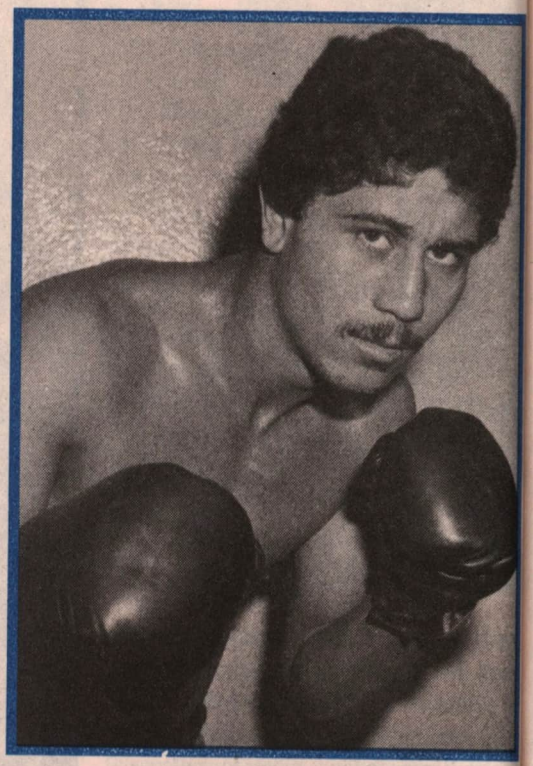
A couple of years ago, writer and historian Mario Rivera Martino ranked Puerto Rico's top 10 fighters of all-time, placing Gomez at the top, followed by Wilfred Benitez, Carlos Ortiz, Esteban DeJesus, Edwin Rosario, Pedro Montanez, Hector Camacho, Sixto Escobar, Jose Basora, and Jose Torres. That's some pretty good company, but Trinidad wasn't considered yet. Now is as good a time as any, it seems, to try to figure where Trinidad rates with those golden oldies.

Trinidad's strengths and weaknesses must be discussed to gain some sort of handle on where he belongs on that list of elites. His power is unquestioned, bolstered by the fact that proven survivors Camacho and Whitaker are the only men to take him to the final bell since he outpointed Jake Rodriguez in 1991. He is also a more-than-capable boxer, as he demonstrated in figuring out Whitaker's puzzling southpaw style and matching wits with Oba Carr before winning by eighth-round stoppage in 1994.

The biggest question Trinidad has to answer is how well his fragile chin will hold up over time. Yory Boy Campas had him down, which is no shame considering Campas' punching power, but so did Anthony Stephens, who has never been a big banger. Even Whitaker seemed to have him wobbled a bit in the middle rounds, though Trinidad never seemed in danger of going down.

To date, Trinidad has compiled an impressive record with some notable victories. Beating future IBF junior welter champion Rodriguez in just his 13th fight was a good win for an up-and-comer, but it's what he has done in championship bouts that's really eye-catching. Trinidad destroyed Maurice Blocker, a worthy champion, to win the 147-pound IBF belt back in '93, and added a first-round knockout of Luis Garcia in his first defense. While beating Camacho raised his profile, it was wins over the likes of Campas and Carr that really separated him from the competition.

Starting in '95, however, Trinidad's frequency and level of competition began to suffer. Wins over Roger Turner, Rodney Moore, Freddie Pendleton, Ray Lovato, Kevin Lueshing, and Troy Waters hardly captured the public's imagination. He spent more time talking about wanting a fight with De La Hoya and squabbling



Some historians believe that Wilfredo Gomez, who won the WBC super bantamweight, WBC featherweight, and WBA junior lightweight titles, was the greatest fighter the island country of Puerto Rico ever produced.

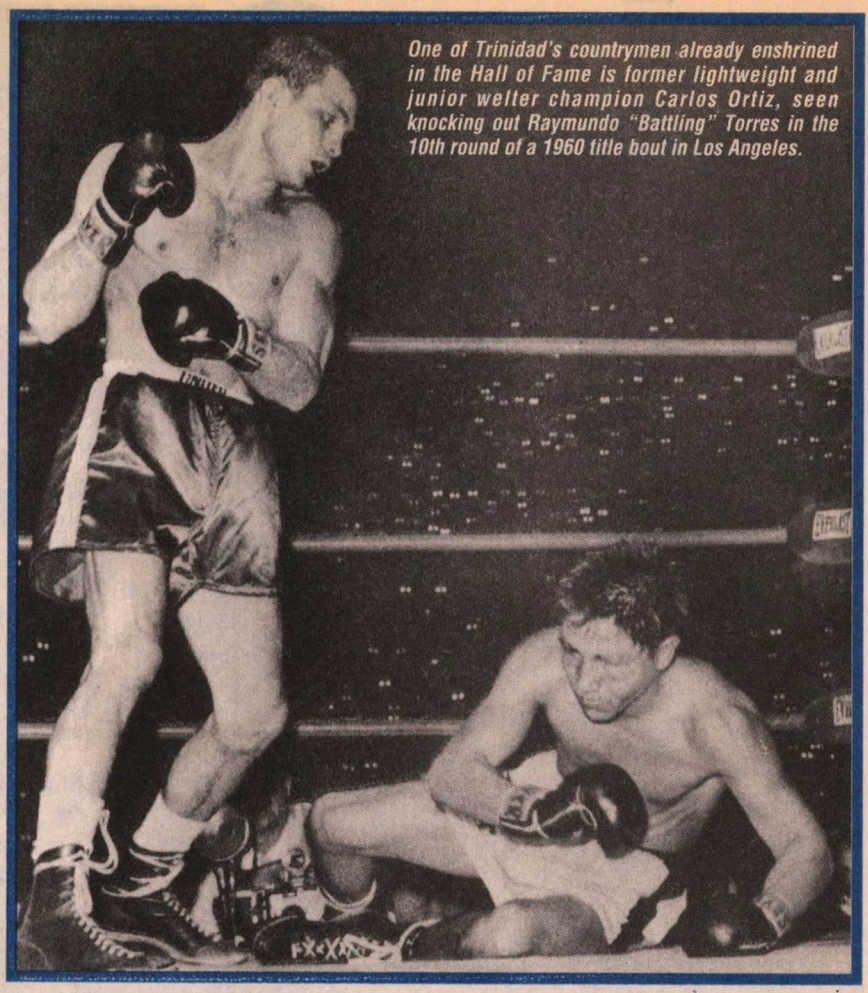
with promoter Don King than he did proving himself in the ring. Sadly, Trinidad wasted some prime years in the process.

Trinidad seemed to get himself back on the right track with his victory over Whitaker. While Whitaker was obviously no longer the dominant pound-for-pound fighter he had been through much of the 1990s, especially after a long layoff and a stint in drug rehabilitation, he was still by far the biggest test Trinidad had faced in many years. Before a wildly cheering throng of flag-waving Puerto Ricans at Madison Square Garden, Trinidad completely dominated "Sweet Pea," shaking off a bit of his own rust in the process.

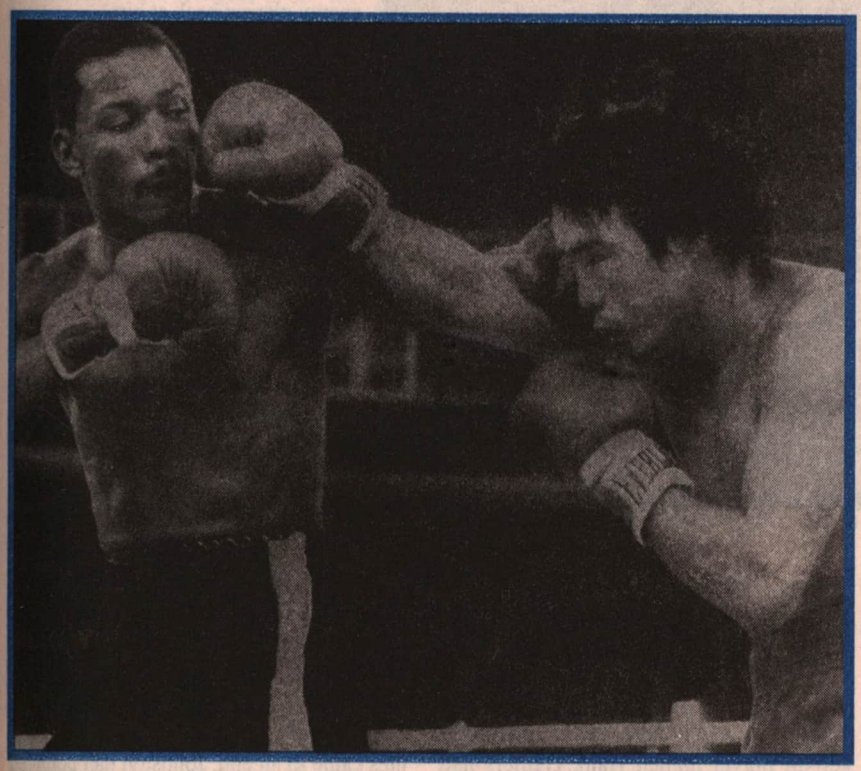
For now, it seems safe to place Trinidad among the top 10 fighters in Puerto Rican history. He has already surpassed Montanez, Camacho, Escobar, Basora, and Torres with his accomplishments. While Rosario won four world title belts, he came up short in his biggest tests, losing by knockout to Jose Luis Ramirez and Julio Cesar Chavez.

So far, however, Trinidad doesn't have the big win that could move him further up the list. DeJesus handed Roberto Duran his first defeat, and even though he lost two subsequent rematches, he would have been a dominant lightweight in most any era. Ortiz defeated the likes of Joe Brown, Sugar Ramos, Flash Elorde, and Ismael Laguna. Benitez was a defensive whiz and a master boxer who became the youngest world champion in history by beating Antonio Cervantes at age 17. He later added title fight wins over Carlos Palomino, Maurice Hope, and Duran to stake his claim to greatness. Gomez enjoyed a long and distinguished championship run at 122 pounds, making 17 defenses, and won titles at featherweight and junior lightweight.

The final judgment on Trinidad will take a while yet. Great challenges like De La Hoya, Ike Quartey, James Page, and Jose Luis Lopez all await him, and there's no shortage of talent in the junior middleweight division should he continue to struggle to make the 147-pound weight limit. It is those fights that will ultimately decide where Trinidad belongs on history's roll call, both among his fellow Puerto Ricans and among other champions from around the world. ■



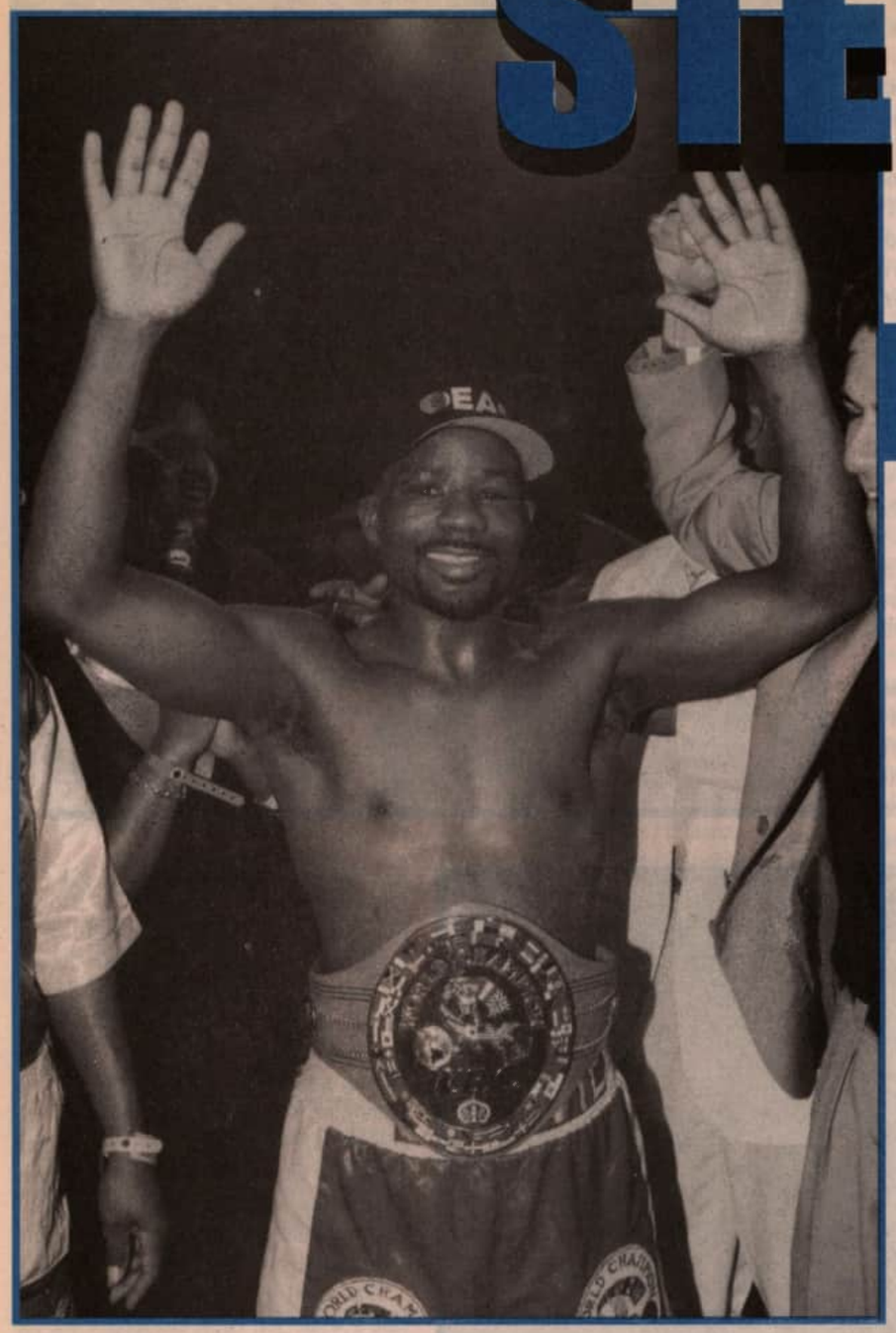
One of Trinidad's countrymen already enshrined in the Hall of Fame is former lightweight and junior welter champion Carlos Ortiz, seen knocking out Raymundo "Battling" Torres in the 10th round of a 1960 title bout in Los Angeles.



Puerto Rican lightweight Esteban DeJesus, the first man to beat Roberto Duran, is pictured defending the WBC 135-pound belt with a sixth-round knockout of Japanese challenger Buzzsaw Yamabe in 1977. Trinidad, likewise, wants to be the first to defeat De La Hoya.

STEVIE JOHNSTON

I CAN ROUGH UP MOSLEY ... AGAIN!



The smile and the belt are back. Johnston went into a prolonged funk after losing the WBC lightweight title to Cesar Bazan in June 1998, but all is right again following his victory in the rematch.

Photos by Marty Rosengarten

By Ted Bodenrader

Stevie Johnston was slouched on a stool, gasping for air, as he gazed through sweat-drenched eyes at the figure seated opposite him. Some 16 feet away, the enemy was doing much of the same, eyeballing Johnston with a competitive zest in his stare.

It was close by, in this same Loyola Marymount gymnasium, that a young basketball player named Hank Gathers had collapsed in a lifeless heap one tragic night in 1990. But it was a year later now, and Johnston was engrossed in his own tragedy. He desperately needed a way to offset a bigger, faster opponent and he needed to do it quickly. Otherwise the next thing to collapse in this building would be his Olympic Festival title hopes. To Johnston, it wasn't just about the tournament. It was about the enemy glaring back at him.

After all, Sugar Shane Mosley was approaching legendary status as an amateur boxer, having bettered a rising star named Oscar De La Hoya, not once, but twice, in these amateur competitions. He had also gotten the best of Johnston in their first encounter, in the national championships, and here they were, deadlocked going into the final round of their latest confrontation.

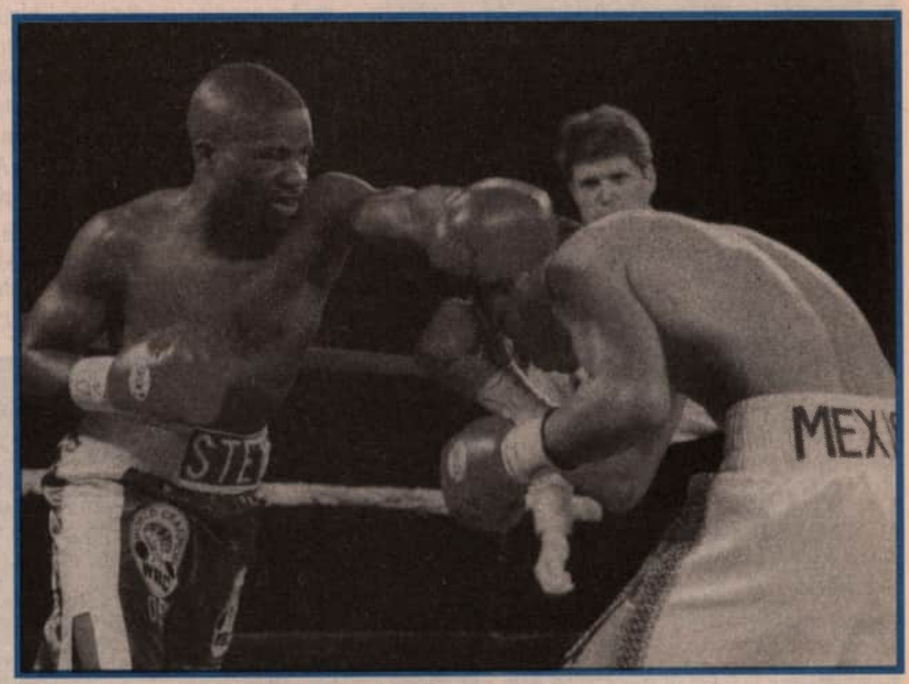
As Johnston peered across the ring at Mosley, suddenly a light bulb would flash in the mind of the man who owned the titles of trainer, manager, and uncle. Richard Johnston quickly shouted the revelation into his nephew's ear.

"Go right after him," snapped Richard. "Just go right at him and rough him up."

And that's exactly what the young Johnston did. When the ensuing three minutes came to an end, Johnston had pounded out a close decision victory, while Mosley had some pounded-out ribs.

"I remember after the fight, Shane kept complaining about how rough Stevie was," recalled Richard. "And I always knew that would be the way to beat him. Just to be real aggressive, because Stevie can take a punch. Shane? I don't know about that."

Nowadays, the headgear is off, the world title belts are out, and what would seem like a trivial amateur bout of eight years ago has suddenly been resurrected into something much more significant. Over the past year, Mosley has quickly developed into what Roy Jones is to light heavyweights, what De La Hoya is to welterweights, and Prince Naseem Hamed is to featherweights. In his division, he is the star around which all surrounding bodies revolve. Not only is Mosley the standard of excellence among his lightweight peers, he is also the appending price tag that all others are tugging at.



Johnston channeled all his frustration into the rematch with Bazan, taking the fight to his much taller rival. And although the decision was split, there was no doubt that Johnston deserved the victory.

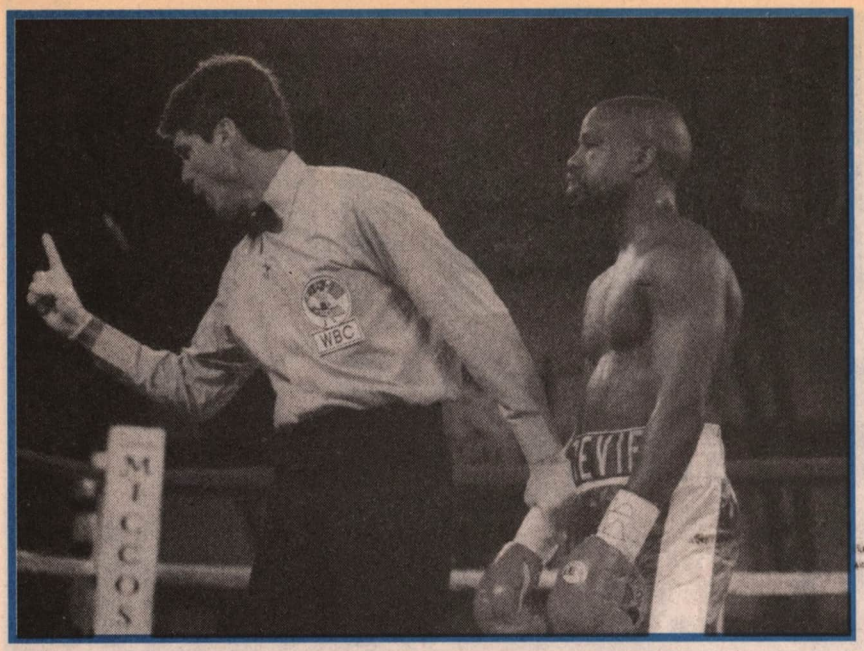
Mosley has chalked up seven defenses of the IBF title, having steamrolled five in 1998 by way of convincing knockout. No sooner had Golden Johnson hit the deck in January of this year (KO 7), than Mosley declared exactly what we all knew he would: He's wiped out the division and plans to pack the bags and move up to junior welterweight.

But Team Johnston is shooting back with a stern word of advice: Not so fast. Because, after all, Johnston has just picked himself up off the canvas after eight months of nearly counting himself out.

It was June 1998 in El Paso, Texas, when his world had unexpectedly caved in. Johnston had just rattled off three defenses of the WBC crown, but it was a lanky 6' Mexican named Cesar Bazan who would end the party and put the champion in a sullen world of hurt.

"I didn't fight my fight, simple as that," said Johnston of the split-decision loss that was announced before 45,000 pro-Bazan fans at the Sun Bowl. "I wasn't focused right for the fight and I let my heart get in the way."

Johnston's heart would then turn south



When referee Tommy Kimmons penalized Johnston a point for rabbit punching in the third round (above), "Li'l But Bad" responded by attacking Bazan with even greater fervor (bottom right).

in the months to come as he would slip into a cocoon of despair. The fight would replay over and over again in his mind. The sting of his first professional loss was downright torturous.

"I didn't want to be bothered with my wife or my kids or anyone," Johnston explained. "I'd spend all my time in the basement. Once in a while, I'd go into the kitchen. But I was completely out of it. Everything was building up in my mind. All I could think about was Bazan. I was even turning down fights; that's how bad I felt."

Johnston would finally leave the basement in time to unload frustration on Demetrio Ceballos in November of last year, hammering him into submission in six ugly rounds. But Ceballos was not Bazan. And it was shortly after this victory that Johnston was offered the only fight on the map he was remotely interested in. The rematch.

Johnston jolted out of hibernation with a newfound passion. He was even hungrier than after he lost to Mosley for the first time some eight years before. He was even hungrier than after he lost to Vernon Forrest in the finals of the 1992 Olympic Trials. Bazan had taken his title and his manhood, and the 5'4½" Johnston was hell-bent on getting both back. So every time Johnston would pound the stuffing out of the heavybag in the ensuing training camp, it was Bazan's face, and not an Everlast logo, that reflected in his eyes.

One day, amid a grueling workout, a young visitor stopped by the gym as the ex-champ was preparing for his second war with Bazan.

"Stevie, when's the next time you're gonna kick someone's ass?" asked Johnston's six-year-old cousin.

The answer to that would be February 27.

Revenge was set for the Miccosukee Casino tent in Miami, where a more focused, more determined Johnston confronted the towering Bazan. It was in the closing moments of the opening round when uncle Richard's words from years past seemed to echo in Johnston's ears.

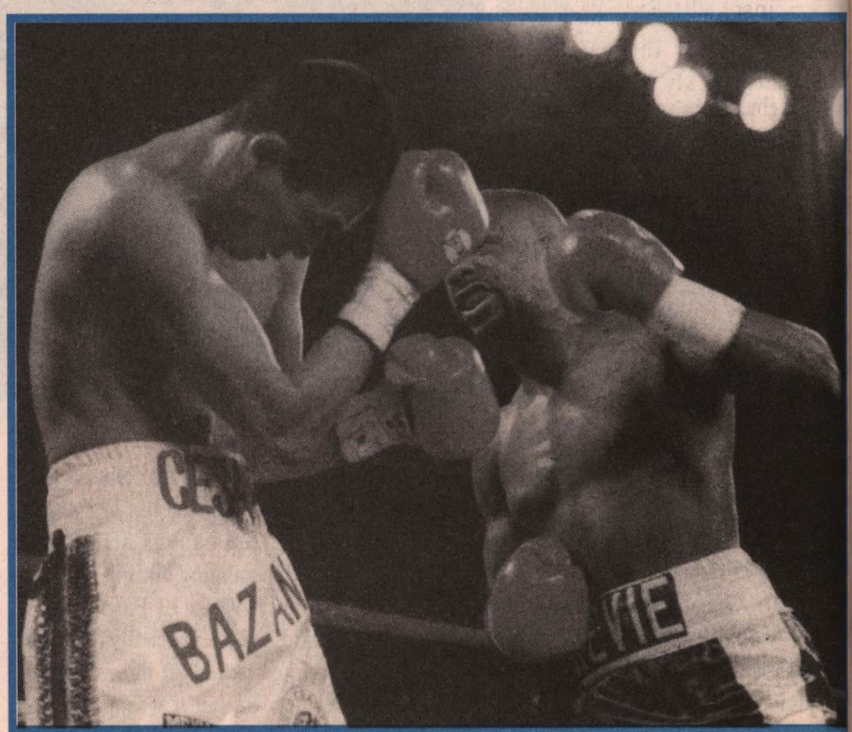
Go right at him. Rough him up.

Johnston unloaded a crisp three-punch combination to Bazan's noggin that would become commonplace throughout the ensuing 11 rounds. In the third round, when Johnston inadvertently thudded Bazan on the back of the head, referee Tommy Kimmons awarded the champion a lengthy recovery period—and then deducted a point from Johnston for what he declared an illegal rabbit punch.

It was then that Johnston became instantly supercharged as he closed out the round with a furious flurry. He had taken the strategy of the first fight out of the rematch, and now the two combatants were engaged in an all-out street fight.

"All I was trying to do was pressure him," said Johnston. "I was bouncing all over the ring, and when he hit me with a shot, I was hitting back three times. I was just coming after him. Just coming and coming."

And after round three, Johnston kept coming and coming and didn't exit the tent until he had his old belt back. As Michael Buffer announced the good news (although it came in the form of a surprisingly narrow split 115-112, 114-113, 113



116 decision), Johnston was whisked into the air in triumph. Eight months of agony was history.

"I was overwhelmed," said Johnston, 26-1 (14). "It was just like Roberto Duran and Sugar Ray Leonard all over again. I felt the way Leonard did after he came back and beat Duran in the second fight. It felt that great."

With the monkey named Bazan, 34-3-1 (23), flung far from his back, Johnston believes he is now standing firmly atop the lightweight division. Both his pride and his title belt are firmly fastened. However, he still looks upward at the 5'9" Mosley, the rising icon who has cracked the top quintet in nearly every pound-for-pound list.

But while his blinding speed and riveting power crumpled veteran tough guys like John-John Molina and Jesse James Leija in the past year, the knock on the 27-year-old Mosley is that he remains without a gem on his resume. That's why some insiders feel if he makes the leap to the land of 140-pounders where fresh, new challenges await, Mosley could be leaving one such juicy challenge in his rear-view mirror.

Ask Richard Johnston, and he sticks to the same theory that dawned on him that desperate moment in a college gymnasium in 1991. While Mosley is now drawing obvious comparisons to the great Sugar Ray Robinson, Richard sees the same chink in Mosley's armor that he did back then. He saw it in the Molina fight. He saw it in Mosley's eighth-round knockout of Demetrio Ceballos. And again in the Eduardo Morales fight on the TNT network. Then again with Leija at Foxwoods last November.

"Shane can't fight backing up," said Richard. "I saw him on TNT and [Morales] hit him and his legs straightened up. I saw Molina hit him and his legs straightened up. He had hell with Ceballos. That kid was real aggressive and he isn't the same class of fighter as Stevie. Shane's real good when he's the aggressor, but when guys make him back up, he's in trouble."

It's the keep-coming, keep-coming workhorse tendency that Team Johnston feels would ultimately foil Mosley's unbeaten run. It's a strategy that many of Mosley's past 31 opponents have attempted, but met with little success. Then again, few can put the heat on the way Johnston can.

"I just don't think he's been tested," said Johnston. "He's a great boxer, but he hasn't fought the same class of opponents I have. If I were to fight him, I'd come in in great shape and I would do just what I did with Bazan. I'd just keep coming at him, pressuring him, trying to rough him up. And I'm sure all Shane would do is hold me and stuff."

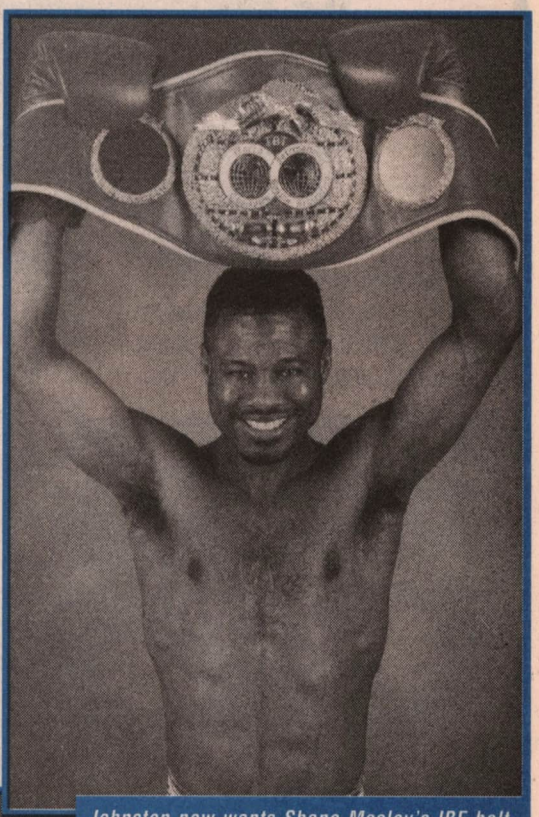
Of course, there is yet another side of Johnston that can be brutal hell to deal with, something that Bazan had to find out the hard way in Miami. When Johnston loses a prize fight, he takes it personally.

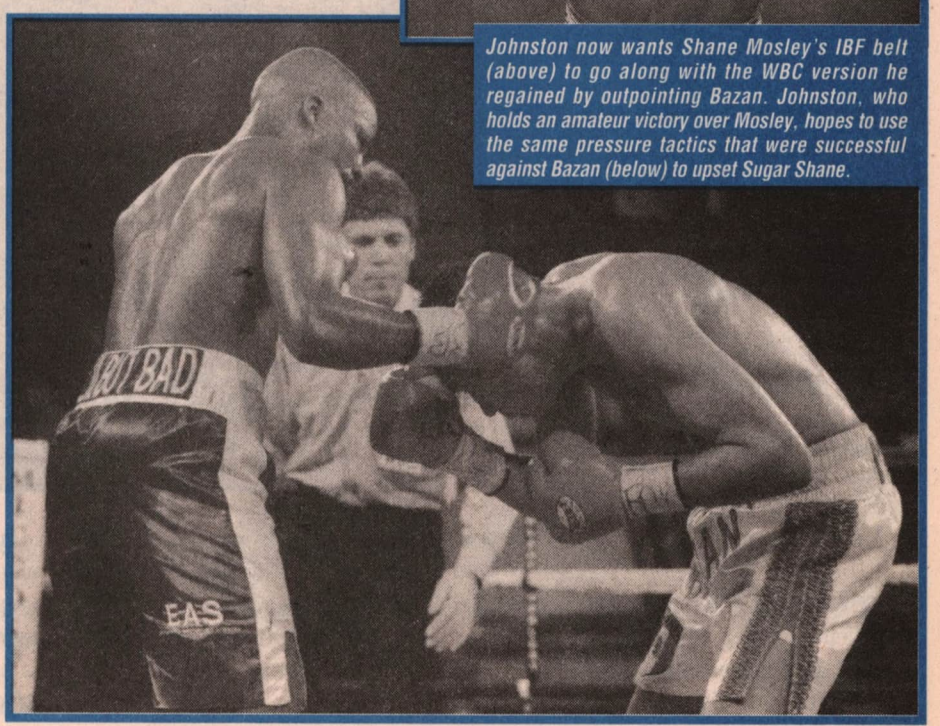
"There's nothing I hate more than losing," he'll tell you. The way Johnston sees it, he still owes Mosley one. After their 1991 Olympic Festival duel, Mosley responded with a decision win a year later in an amateur fight where Johnston admits he "didn't give a bleep."

But now they are professionals, where every punch can ring up a new dollar sign. And the sign Johnston is waving in the air these days is telling the best lightweight in the world to stay put. Stevie Johnston is off the canvas now. He's out of the basement and he's looking to rough somebody up.

Preferably somebody named Mosley. ■

Ted Bodenrader covers boxing for the Boston Herald.



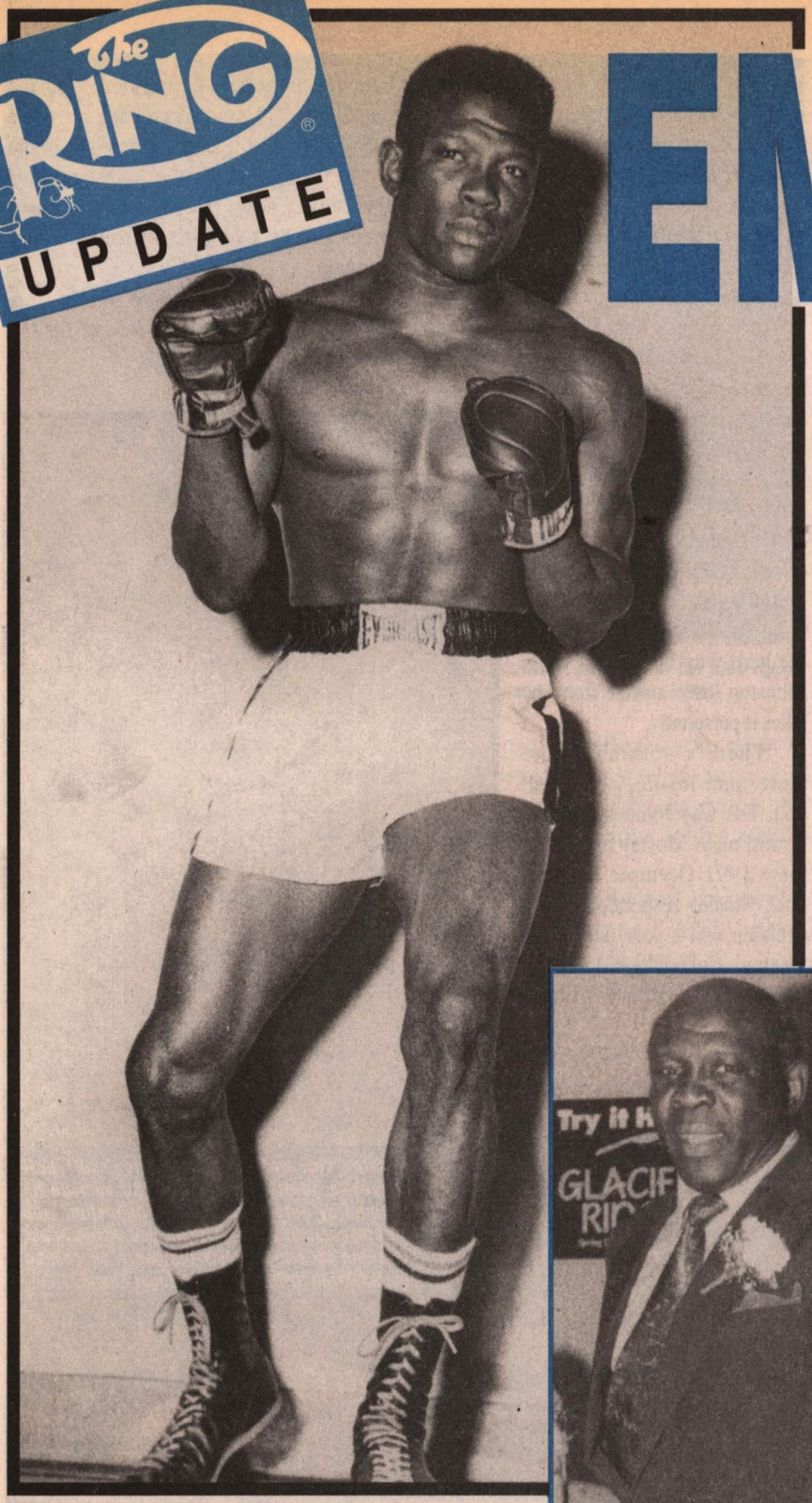


Johnston now wants Shane Mosley's IBF belt (above) to go along with the WBC version he regained by outpointing Bazan. Johnston, who holds an amateur victory over Mosley, hopes to use the same pressure tactics that were successful against Bazan (below) to upset Sugar Shane.

The RING UPDATE

EMILE

"I Still Feel For Kid Paret"



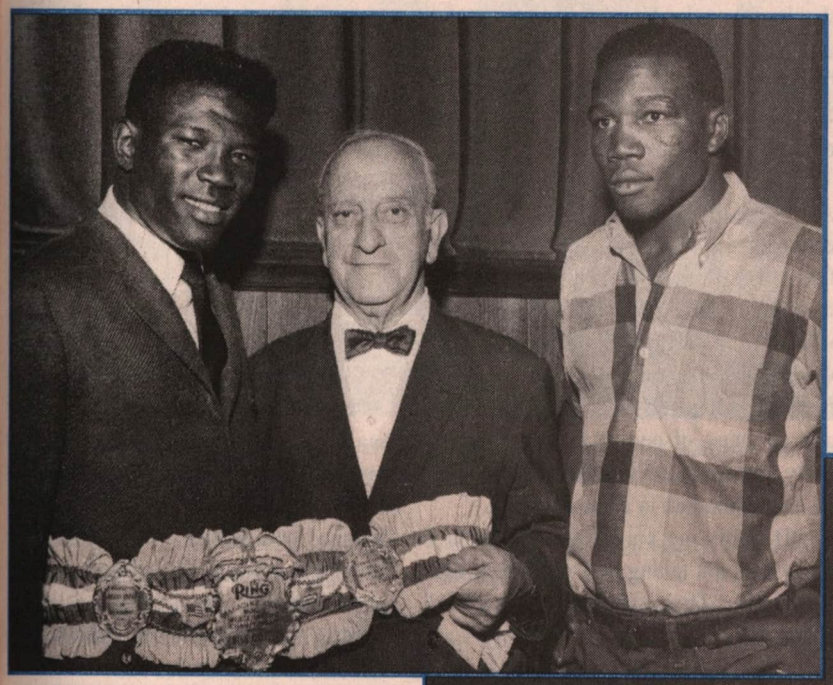
Griffith as he looked in his prime as the undisputed welterweight champion and on his induction to the International Boxing Hall Of Fame in Canastota in 1992 (inset).

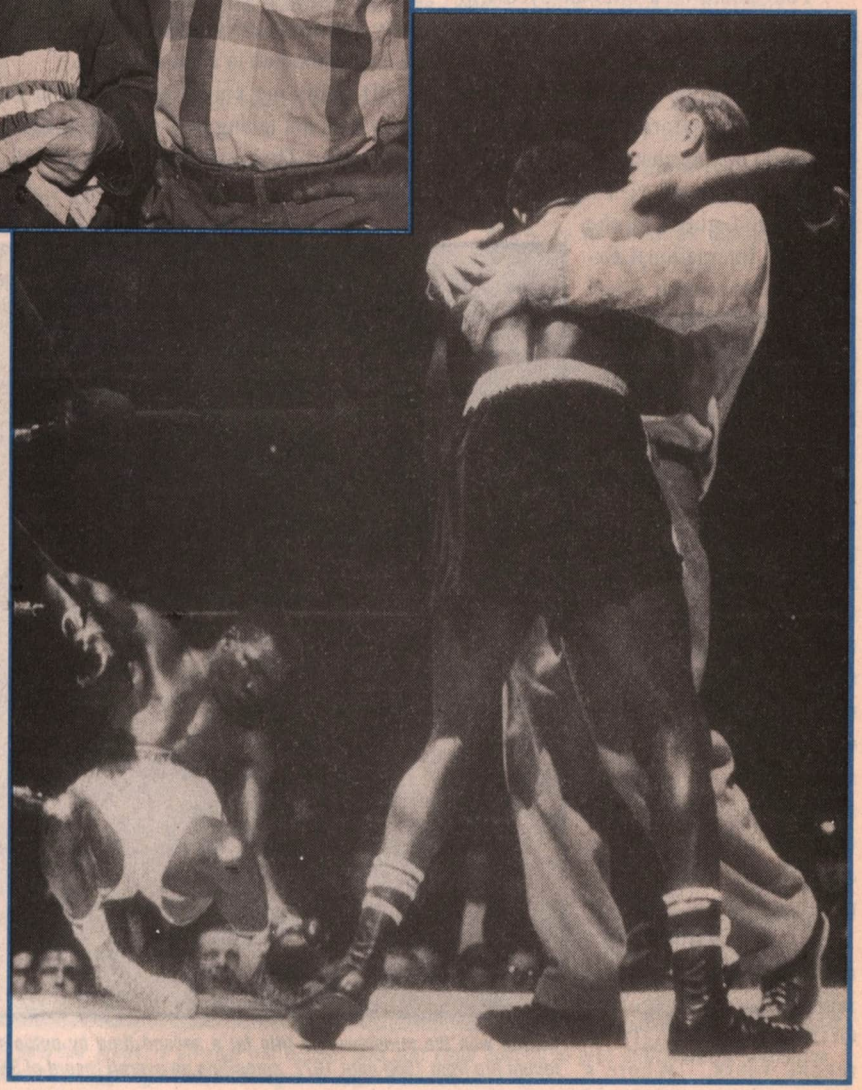
By Brian Doogan

He walked down the aisle, chest out, arms swinging, nostrils flaring, heart thumping, head proud. A purposeful, sprightly stride took him to the wooden steps up which he, Juan LaPorte, and their fighter, Antanasios Tsiomas, climbed before they ducked between the ropes and set foot in the most natural domain he has ever known—the ring.

Several thoughts crossed his mind as the fighters were introduced inside the ring at the Queens, New York, Elk's Club. He looked at LaPorte, smiling and waving to a face in the crowd, and he remembered the old days, when he was looking after LaPorte and helping make Bonecrusher Smith a world heavyweight champion. Hell, he could even recall the real old days when he was in Tsiomas' shoes and the New York Golden Gloves was the first step toward a Hall of Fame career encompassing five world championships and a series of highs and lows that were bound in subsequent years to leave him hopelessly ambivalent. Tonight, though, as he looked around him and smelt an atmosphere as comfortably familiar to

GRIFFITH





Griffith receives his championship belt from Nat Fleischer, founder of THE RING, as ex-champ Benny "Kid" Paret looks on. Paret regained the title shortly afterward, but died as a result of the beating he took from Griffith in their tragic 1963 rubber match (right).

him as Mom's home cooking, he felt good. Towel slung over his right shoulder, baseball cap covering the bald top of his head, fight face on so as to complete the metamorphosis, Emile Griffith was back where he belonged, and he loved it.

"Of course he loves it," said Howard Albert, the redoubtable milliner who, with Gil Clancy, managed Griffith throughout his almost 20 years in the ring. "This gives him a feeling of being, of belonging, of meaning something to people again, fight people in particular. When you see him in there, working the corner, motivating and molding young fighters, it's the same old Emile. Not that he ever changed. He never really grew up. He was always a kid, still is. And kids need a purpose.

"Training the young kids to be champions of the future and to grow into better people also has given him a new sense of purpose. And it heartens me to see that. Emile, you see, was one of the most fun guys to be around, always had a smile on his face, always felt happy, joyful, and was able to make those around him feel the same way. He deserves a bit of happiness now."

Griffith's easy smile, pleasant disposition, and quick wit made it natural for people to gravitate to him. When he fought Chris Christensen in Copenhagen

Griffith and his mother, Emelda, in April 1966, the night Emile beat Dick Tiger in New York City to win the world middleweight title. Mrs. Griffith's death a few years ago was a huge blow to the five-time former champion.

in February 1963, he won over the locals on arrival.

"You should be a little annoyed with yourselves, all you Danish people gathered here today," he announced. "If you hadn't let go of the Virgin Islands, I'd be standing here before you as your first ever world boxing champion."

Even on a recent visit to London—as an honored guest at the inaugural International Ex-Boxers' Convention where former world welterweight champion John H. Stracey threw his arms around him and said sincerely and movingly, "Mr. Griffith, I idolized you,"—Griffith was in a mischievous mood. A group photo at the end of a memorable five-day excursion was broken up prematurely and hilariously when Griffith, with comic timing that might have been the envy of Groucho Marx, stormed off, crying as he made his exit, "Not one more damn photo am I standing around for. Where's the plane, Howie?"

But the slapstick humor masks the dark, poignant reality that has engulfed Griffith increasingly in recent years. "Where's Emile?" had become a lighthearted catchphrase for the group as they toured London in between the autograph-signing sessions and dinner engagements. Its basis was his disappearance for several hours on the opening day, a detour to a bar near the airport the suspected reason for the impromptu vanishing act. Drinking has become an ever more ominous escape for Griffith from the demons that have invaded his life since the fateful night of March 24, 1962, when Benny "Kid" Paret was beaten by him to a point from which he never regained consciousness and died in hospital 10 days later.

"He's not well, though it seems he is," Albert said regretfully, a sentiment echoed sadly by Griffith's friend, Carlos Ortiz. The former lightweight champion from Puerto Rico meets with Griffith regularly. He hates thinking about the days Griffith declines to properly take care of himself. Because it's a waste. A waste and an abuse of one of the most inspiringly and formidably unquenchable spirits ever embodied in a human being.

"It pains me sometimes because I know he's not taking care of himself like he should," Ortiz confided. "It's a real shame."

With wide, bright eyes and a face still as fresh as when he was assailing and defeating the world's best welterweights, junior middleweights, and middleweights, Griffith, now 61, acknowledges the problem even if he remains stubbornly disinclined to confront it.

"When I would finish a championship fight, to celebrate my achievement, my manager would give me a taste of champagne," he explained, his measured, almost erudite tones belying the poverty-ridden harshness of his youth and his lack of education upon arrival in New York as a teenage stock boy at Albert's millinery. "I would take it and I would like it and I would want more. He said, 'No.' I said, 'Okay,' but I used to go behind his back. Now, I can go crazy on the bottle. Sometimes I'm down. I use the drinking as an escape, although maybe it's an excuse.

"My manager, and Juan, too, still tell me, 'No.' And I have to be careful, for if someone says to either of them that he saw the champ in the bar drinking, and I thought I was getting away without them knowing it, they'll challenge me, and I have to run right out of the gym."

Paret, the accomplished Cuban cham-

Griffith won the middleweight title for a second time by outpointing Nino Benvenuti in September 1967. Griffith fought pro from 1958 until 1977, compiling an overall record of 85-24-2 (23) with 1 no-contest.

Griffith clowns around with fellow Hall of Famers Carlos Ortiz (far left), Joey Giardello, and Jake LaMotta. Looks like former milliner Griffith has his eyes on LaMotta's cowboy hat.

pion whose death caused such public outcry that it almost finished boxing as a sporting spectacle in the United States, is not the reason he drinks, though the memory of that brutal 12th round in Madison Square Garden still haunts him.

"That fight stays with me all the time, and periodically I have flashbacks that are so vivid I feel like I'm going through it all over again," Griffith revealed hesitantly, his eyes welling up, his voice failing to disguise the pent-up emotions of a man whose nature has always been sensitive. "At the time, I blamed myself. I thought about quitting, but what else would I have done? Now when I see two fighters slugging in the corner, I find myself looking away. I turn my head. It's a subconscious reaction. It's a part of my life that happened many years ago, but it's always with me. I still feel for Kid Paret."

More relevant to Griffith's state of mind these days is the death in the last couple of years of his mother, Emelda, and the beating he suffered in the streets a few years before that very nearly ended his own life.

"Three guys, I didn't know them, came up to me. They wanted some money," Griffith recalled. "They caught me at the wrong time. They got me when I was drunk. Otherwise, it might have been a good little rumble. I've been known to hold my own pretty good. But they jumped me, and I was there for the taking. I knew where I was. I knew what was going on around me, but there wasn't much I could do to stop them. They got me bad."

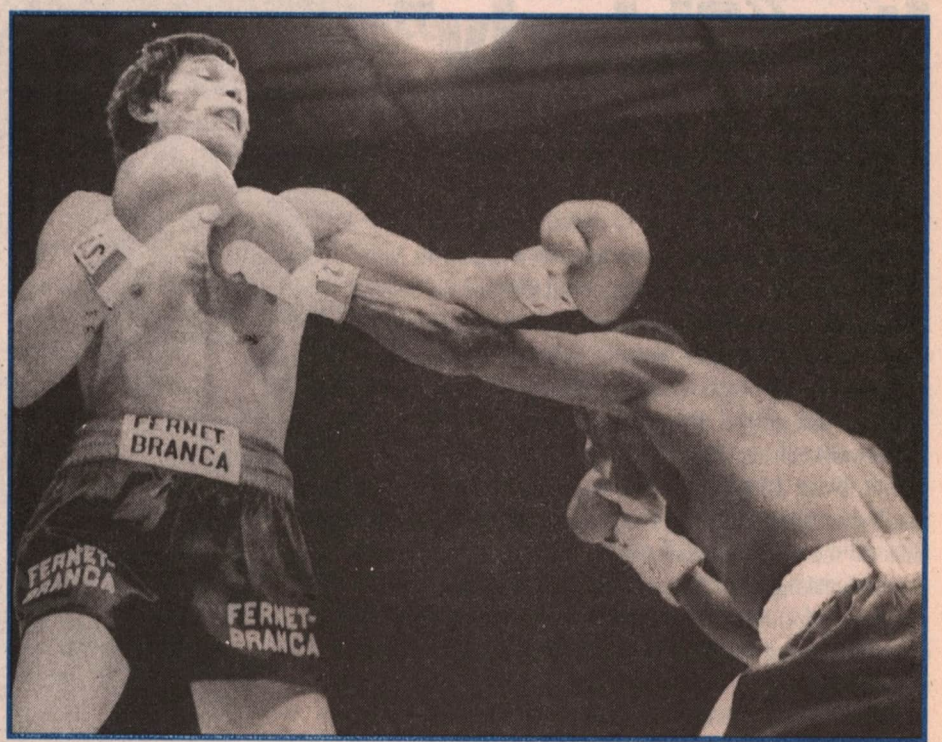
When LaPorte, as close to Griffith as a son, got him in his bed the next day, he was in the fetal position, moaning inconsolably, his beat-up body aching all over. He was hospitalized, and it was several months before he recovered from his wounds. The mental scars have been tougher to overcome.

"They beat the hell out of him," said Albert. "He was lucky [to have survived]."

He was and he knows it. But the death of Griffith's mother, with whom he shared a relationship so intimate they may as well have remained attached umbilically, was a sickening blow.

"We were as close as me and box-

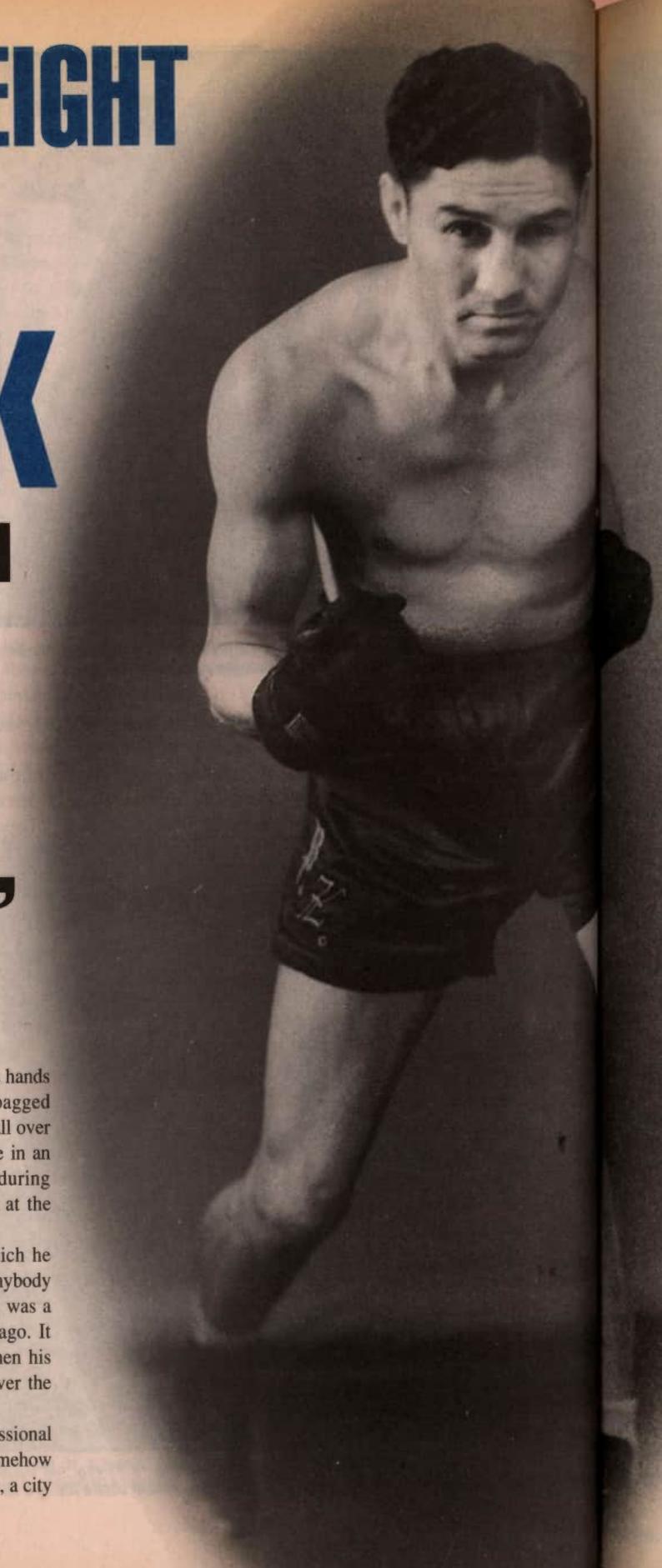
(Continued on page 77)



Although past his prime, a 35-year old Griffith was still good enough to give middleweight champion Carlos Monzon a tough fight before losing a 15-round decision in 1973.

FEATHERWEIGHT PHIL ZWICK

He Changed The Way Boxing Treated Its "Elderly"



By Pete Ehrmann

Phil Zwick spent most of his life with a rifle in his hands or boxing gloves on them. With the one he bagged lions, leopards, and other exotic animal species all over the world. With the other, he brought down big game in an astonishing ring career spanning almost 40 years, during which he just missed the bull's eye in his one shot at the featherweight championship.

But Zwick's biggest trophy, and the one for which he deserves to be remembered in this day when hardly anybody blinks at the sight of a senior citizen trading punches, was a ground-breaking court decision over a half-century ago. It was a decision that allowed him to keep fighting when his own state boxing commission insisted that nobody over the age of 36 had any business in the ring.

There was a minimum age requirement for professional boxers in Wisconsin, too. Strangely enough, it was somehow overlooked when Zwick had his first fight in Appleton, a city

Zwick and a native guide pose with a zebra that the fighter shot while on safari in South Africa. Zwick had been an avid hunter and fisherman since his boyhood in rural Wisconsin.

not far from his home of Kaukauna in the northeastern part of the Badger State, when he was 13 years old. His older brother, Jack, a hard-punching welterweight called "The Sheik," was then headlining throughout the Fox River Valley.

According to an article in their hometown newspaper, "Fighting was the main sport in the Zwick family, but there was another sporting activity that rated close behind for the six boys by the name of Zwick, who resided on the outskirts of Kaukauna on the Fox River. Hunting, trapping, and fishing was number two, and there are few in Kaukauna who can surpass the Zwicks with the rifle or rod and reel."

The only protest regarding Zwick's early ring appearances came from the officials at the school he attended, who tore down the fight posters the barely pubescent flyweight tacked up in the hallways. A diploma wasn't high on Zwick's list of priorities anyway, and in the early-1920s he quit school, packed his ring gear and .22 rifle, and headed for Florida. Within months, he had impressed Tampa boxing writers as, in the words of one of them, "one of the rarities of the modern ring—a straight puncher with a left to the solar plexus that has dropped every boy he has met."

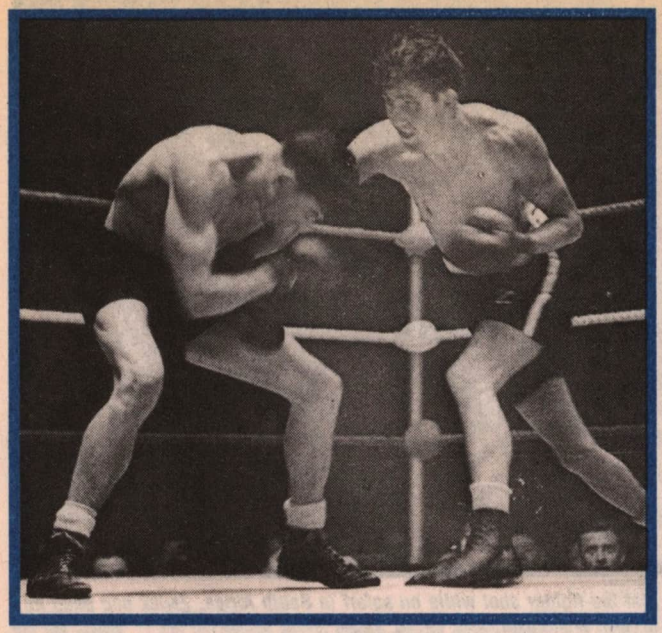
In the spring of 1926, the 5'8½", 120-pounder went north to Cleveland, where Zwick joined the stable of "Parson" Tom McGinty. It took his first opponent, Frankie Smith, 15 minutes to regain consciousness after Zwick knocked him out, and before long the Cleveland press was hailing Zwick a "second Terry McGovern." At the end of that year, he had lost only one of his last 26 bouts, and his accomplishments in 1927 included knocking down Armand Santiago five times on his way to a victory over the Cuban champion, taking seven out of 10 rounds against "California Joe" Lynch, and stopping Mexican champion Billy Bonillas:

Although outpointed by baby-faced Milwaukee contender Joey Sangor on New Year's Day 1928, Sangor has told reporters that Zwick was "the hardest puncher I ever met. His right hand landed alongside my ear in one of the closing rounds, and believe me, I felt the sting for at least a half-hour after the fight. Give Phil another year of campaigning with ordinary featherweights, and he'll be on top."

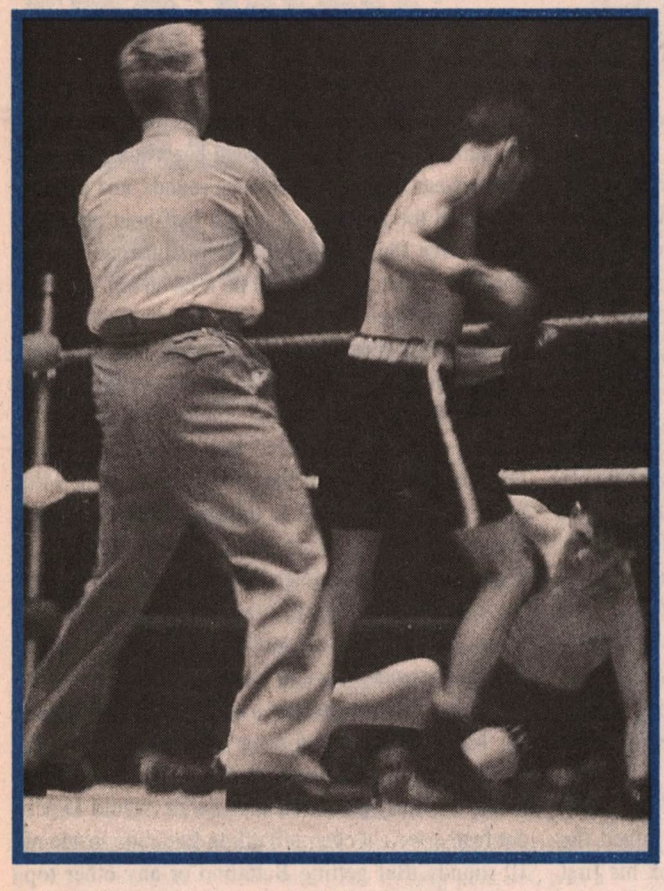
But just three weeks after the Sangor fight, it was no ordinary fighter in the other corner. Not only was Bud Taylor recognized as the bantamweight champion by the National Boxing Association, but many boxing writers considered him better than most featherweights, too. In the second round of a wild fight, a Taylor left hook to the gut sank Zwick, who ever-after insisted, to no avail, of course, that he'd beaten the count of referee Walter Houlihan.

A second bad break, literally, came in March, when Zwick broke his left arm in the fifth round against contender Yacinto Valdez, but still managed to go the distance and get a draw. After surgery at the Mayo Clinic and a long layoff, the beanpole featherweight was back on track. By the end of 1930, McGinty predicted that Zwick would knock out featherweight champ Battling Battalino inside of 10 rounds. But getting Battalino or any other top featherweight inside the ropes was a problem, and Zwick appealed to the Fourth Estate for help.

"I can't see why Kid Chocolate, Lew Massey, Earl Mastro, Benny Bass, or the rest of them, including Battalino, don't give me a shot," complained Zwick. "I am pleading with the newspapermen of the country to make these fighters come out



One of Zwick's best fights was against British lightweight champion Jimmy Walsh, whom he twice dropped en route to winning a 12-round decision in Liverpool. The American boxer beat so many English fighters, the government refused to extend his visa.



of their shells and give me a fight."

On January 26, 1931, Zwick finally got a big-name opponent when he took a fight against Freddie Miller on short notice and was stopped in the third. While future featherweight champion Miller was credited with a kayo, some press reports indicated that Zwick refused to continue after three claims of foul were ignored, and others said he had been cut too badly to continue. But when Zwick made his Madison Square Garden debut on June 15, h made the most of the opportunity. Jimmy Slavin had never bee stopped in more than 90 bouts, but that claim ended after on minute of the second round of his fight with Zwick.

Hall of Fame light heavyweight champion Battling Levinsky said to have once fought three opponents in 24 hours. Zwick ma be the only fighter to have knocked out the same opponent thre times in one night. Babe Paleco was counted out after a Zwick le hook to the liver put him down in round one of their April '3 fight in Cleveland. But when Paleco insisted he'd been hit lo the on-site commissioner ordered a resumption of the bou Whereupon Zwick promptly put Paleco down again, the refer stopped it again. Paleco asked for a third chance, for some incon prehensible reason got it, and after Zwick floored him a third tim everyone finally agreed the Babe had struck out.

In late-1934, after then-featherweight champion Petey Sarro didn't bite on Zwick's proposal for a winner-take-all match, th boxer the *Washington Times* called "the most feared warrior in th ring today" decided to combine the two great passions of his lif and go on a safari. For the next three years, Zwick boxed a hunted in Australia, Egypt, India, Great Britain, and South Afric enjoying great success on both fronts. South African lightweig champ Laurie Stevens survived a knockdown to win a close dec sion over him in Johannesburg, but Zwick had his sights set another target anyway.

"I've been shooting ever since I was knee-high to an ant Zwick announced upon arriving in South Africa. "I graduat from rabbits to mule deer and black bear, and I'm not leavi Africa without a lion."

He got one, plus a kudu, a water buck, and a zebra.

Great Britain's best boxers knew how the animals felt wh Zwick nailed their hides to the wall. He inflicted the first stoppa on Welsh lightweight champion Boyo Reese, and beat Scotti champ Tony Spiers. In one of Zwick's best performances, he w a 12-round decision over British lightweight champ Jimmy Wal in what a Liverpool newspaper called "a real he-man's fight." fact, Zwick did so well against England's top featherweights a lightweights that, at the behest of the British Boxing Board Control, the government's Ministry of Labour refused to gra him a visa extension to remain in the country.

"If I ever get a lucky break in the boxing game, the sho would probably kill me," Zwick once said. But in 1941, after he returned home to Kaukauna, it looked like his time had fina arrived. Petey Scalzo was recognized as feather champion by t National Boxing Association, and for a $5,000 guarantee, he w induced to come to Milwaukee to fight Zwick for the title.

But first, the Wisconsin legislature had to approve, a Governor Julius Heil signed a special bill allowing 15-rou fights in the state.

"If I'd known the citizens here were going to boo me li that," the indignant governor yelled at the politically incor crowd of 7,000 that gave him the raspberry when he was int duced before the fight at the Milwaukee Auditorium, "I would have signed the bill."

The younger Scalzo was a 2-1 favorite, but Zwick vowed t "if I nail him, I promise you he'll do some funny things." No funny, it turned out, as the thing referee Barney Ross, the for

Featherweight champion Petey Scalzo gave Zwick a shot at the title in 1941, but needed help from referee Barney Ross (inset) to keep the belt via a controversial 15-round decision.

lightweight champion, did one minute into the 15th round of what had been a dull fight until Zwick nailed the champion with a combination that sent Scalzo down outside the ropes. Ross began counting, but then stopped and actually helped Scalzo to his feet. Scalzo held on, and the decision was announced as a draw, with each boxer receiving 75 points from Ross, the sole arbiter.

Then, back in his dressing room, Ross decided that Scalzo had actually won, and changed his scorecard in the champion's favor. Scalzo retained the title either way, but the Wisconsin commission ordered the original draw to stand.

"I have shed the beard, threw away the crutches, and went the 15 rounds," Zwick said at a homecoming celebration in Kaukauna. "I could hardly lick two fellows in the ring, with Mr. Ross taking such good care of Mr. Scalzo."

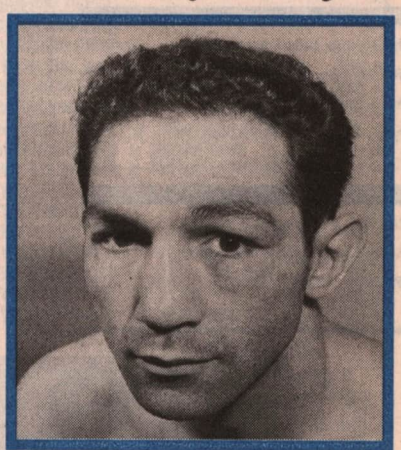
For the next few years, Zwick operated The Ringside Bar in Kaukauna and fought sporadically. He was in great demand as a speaker in schools and on the club circuit, where he showed films of his adventures in boxing and hunting. He ran for mayor of his hometown in 1946, but lost, and that spring, threw his hat back in the boxing ring. Milwaukee's Marion Rhoten had won the state featherweight title while Zwick was giving speeches, but left the ring without it after Zwick knocked him out in three rounds.

Afterward, however, the Wisconsin commission not only stripped the new champion, but ordered Zwick into retirement, invoking its rule prohibiting anyone over 36 from boxing in the state. While Zwick went to great lengths to keep his exact age a secret, he did admit to being over 40, but he saw no reason for that to disqualify him from boxing. Age, he argued before the commission, should not be the determining factor.

"It should be medical testimony," Zwick said, "as there are plenty of boxers who are all washed-up at 26. I've no cauliflower ears or a smashed nose. I don't wear glasses and I have all my own teeth. My weight is 128-130. So open up your hearts, commissioners, and give a good fighter a break."

But the vote went against him, and Zwick went to court. On November 23, 1947, Circuit Court Judge Alvin Reis of Madison ordered the commission to license Zwick on the ground that in 1913 the legislature had prescribed rules for boxing, including a minimum age of 18 and a request that boxers be physically fit, but had not set a maximum age limit.

Zwick's third-round knockout of Alvin Gomez on April 13 proved that "all the ballyhoo about him being too old to fight is a lot of guff," wrote the sports editor of the *Kaukauna Times*. But the still-squeamish state boxing commissioners disagreed, and intervened once more when Milwaukee promoters arranged a non-title bout between Zwick and featherweight champion Willie Pep the following month.



An aging Zwick went to court in order to try an obtain a match with featherweight champ Willie Pep, but the bout never materialized.

"If we okayed a Pep vs. Zwick match, we ought to all go to jail," said commission member Harvey Buchanan.

"Maybe a quiet hanging would be more appropriate," Zwick shot back, calling the refusal to sanction the fight "contempt of court" and wondering where the commission and its fine-tuned sensibilities had been when Barney Ross had violated one of the oldest rules in boxing by helping Scalzo back into the ring seven years earlier.

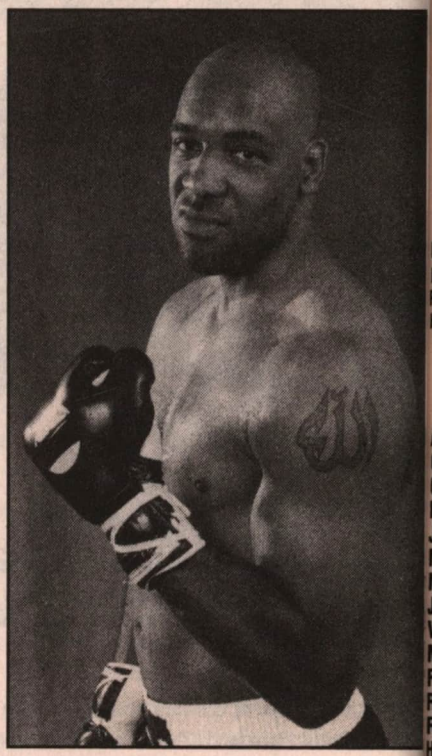
(Continued on page 78)

NEW FACES

MOUNT WHITAKER

Heavyweight

By Joe Santoliquito



PRO RECORD

1996		
July 10	John Keyes, Los Angeles	KO 1
Sept. 16	Mario Osuna, Las Vegas	KO 1
Nov. 21	Dion Burgess, Reseda, CA	KO 1
Dec. 3	Rick Phillips, Indio, CA	KO 2
1997		
Jan. 17	Marco Dickson, Reseda	KO 2
Feb. 25	Orlando Leavall, Long Beach, CA	KO 2
July 5	Jerriel Bazile, Moline, IL	KO 3
July 19	Ismail Raheem, Indio	KO 1
Aug. 9	Isaac Brown, San Benito, CA	KO 1
Oct. 17	Larry Menefee, Phoenix, AZ	KO 2
Nov. 14	Marcus Rhode, S. Paradise Island, TX	KO 2
Dec. 13	Eddie Gonzales, North Lake, IL	KO 1
1998		
Jan. 16	Joe Ballard, Atlantic City	KO 1
Feb. 27	Everett Martin, Studio City, CA	W 8
March 27	Garing Lane, Atlantic City	W 8
May 1	Ray Butler, San Antonio, TX	KO 6
Oct. 8	Jason Yarosz, Kansas City, MO	KO 2
1999		
Jan. 16	Alex Stewart, Las Vegas	KO 7
March 6	Lou Savarese, Atlantic City	L 10

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KOs
19	18	1	0	16

They always came to test *him*. High school kids, older than he was, wanted a piece of him. Even smaller kids liked to challenge him, push his buttons, then wait for a reaction. Lance Whitaker would diffidently tilt his head in response, or run away. They viewed him as a big coward, but Whitaker knew better. One punch and it was all over—for them.

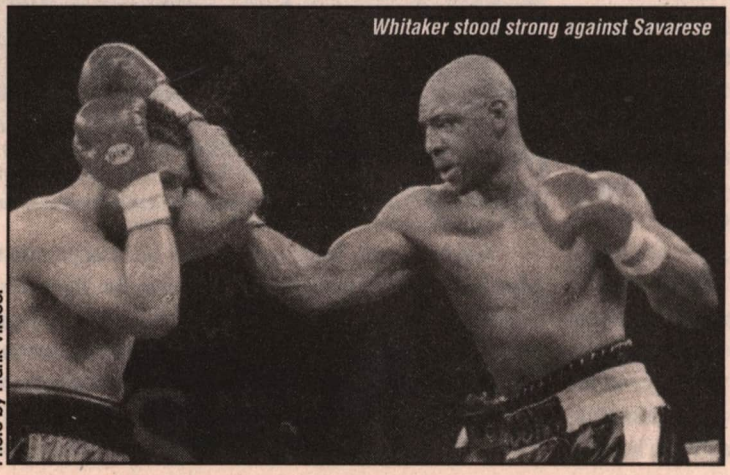
The only person Whitaker—now better known as "Mount"—has ever feared was himself. He knew if he really whacked someone, he could do serious damage, and sometimes, that reluctant kid still comes through when he is in the ring today. So far, Whitaker has done a good job suppressing that fear, building an 18-1 (16) record as a heavyweight. The 6'8", 250-pounder has been fighting professionally only three years, and he is starting to show some promise as more than just a big guy with an interesting name.

Whitaker met his first real test on March 6, when he faced veteran Lou Savarese at the Boardwalk Convention Center in Atlantic City. For five rounds, Whitaker slapped, punched, appeared tentative, and was in constant retreat (the reluctant kid afraid to mix it up). Then in the sixth round, Mount Whitaker blew, winging a torrent of power shots and bodyblows from all angles, finally forcing Savarese to crumble to the canvas.

Savarese survived, and Whitaker, 26, lost by 10-round split decision. But he gained invaluable experience, not to mention a wealth of confidence. He also impressed the people at HBO, who televised the fight and offered the loser an invitation to return.

"I'm the last one to consider a loss a victory, but you have to take things into consid

(Continued on page 7



Whitaker stood strong against Savarese

Photo by Frank Vitucci

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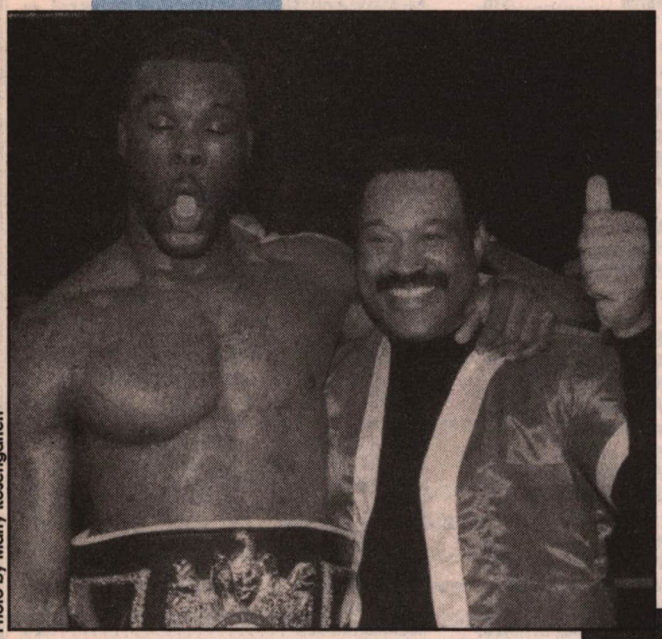


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Trainer Jack Mosley has his thumb in the air, but from the look on Michael Grant's face, it may have been Mosley's finger he was just asked to pull. Grant's January 30 victory over Ahmad Abdin was his first fight with the father of lightweight champion Sugar Shane Mosley in his corner.

You may think the only legend in this photo is baseball great Willie Mays, but Joe Cortez, who refereed such superfights as Tyson-Holmes, Bowe-Holyfield I, and De La Hoya-Chavez I, is a standout in his own right. All Cortez needs to be on par with Mays is to issue a no-look, over-the-shoulder 10-count for his highlight reel.

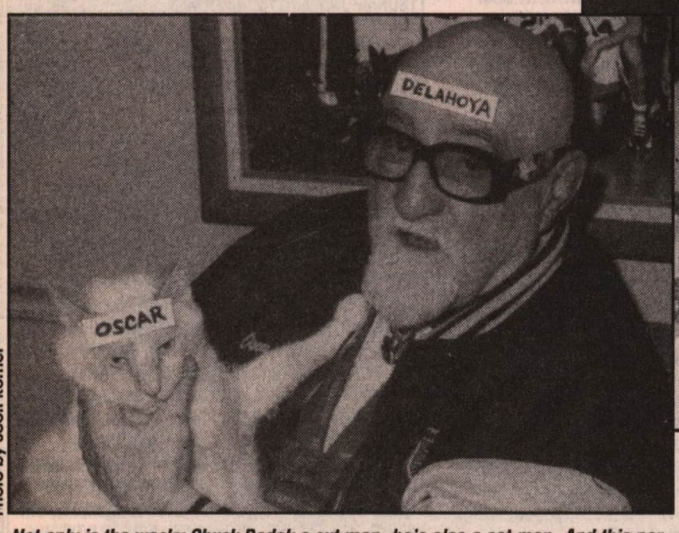
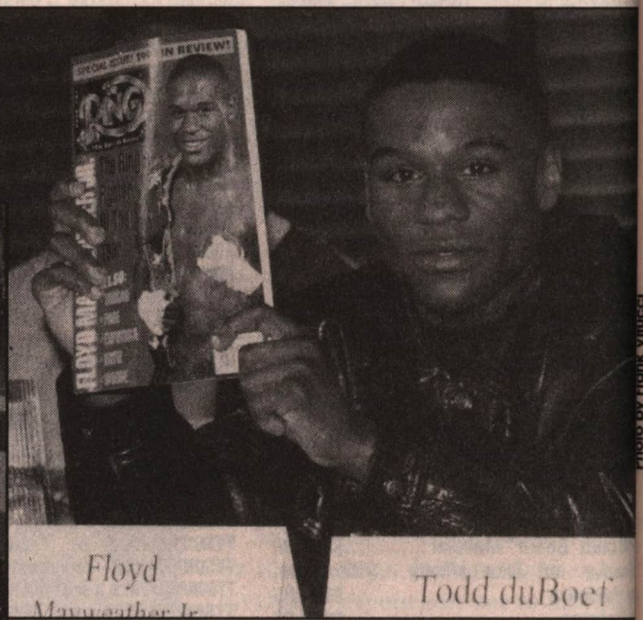


Photo by Scott Romer

Not only is the wacky Chuck Bodak a cut man, he's also a cat man. And this particular cat must be a cut cat, since the feline has stickers on its head just like Bodak. Word is that when Bodak got hungry moments after this photo was taken, he put down the cut cat and picked up a Kit Kat. (Try saying that five times fast.)



"I don't know who this guy on the cover is, but he sure is pretty!" Floyd Mayweather thoroughly enjoyed the April 1999 issue of The Ring, which named him Fighter of the Year for 1998.

Photo by Frank Vitucci

Holding his spectacles in his left hand, Frank Maloney, manager of Lennox Lewis, names a couple of people he feels need to get their vision checked following Lewis' outrageous draw with Evander Holyfield. We agree with you, Frank, but it's hard for someone who dresses himself the way you do to criticize anybody else's eyesight.

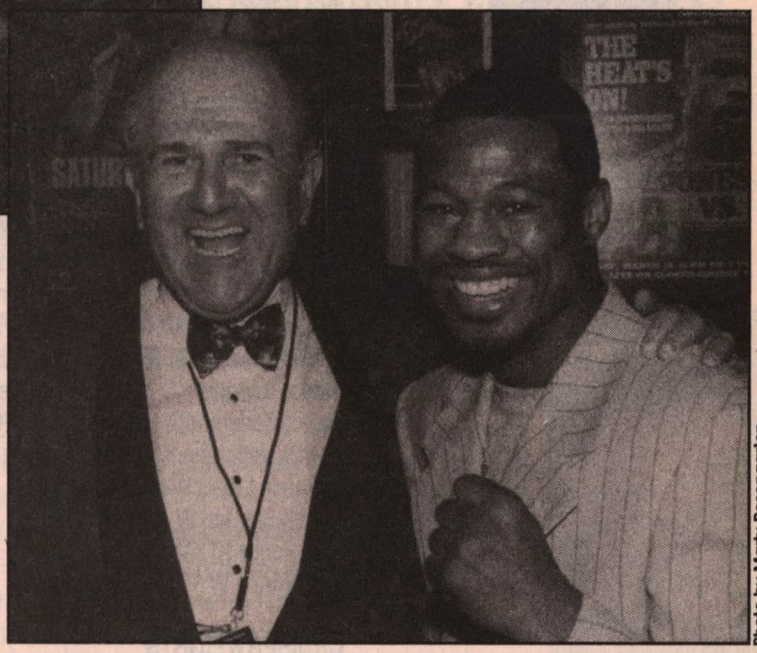


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

And the winner of the who-can-smile-wider contest is ... well, this one's a draw that we can't really argue. HBO's unofficial scorer Harold Lederman and undefeated IBF lightweight champ Shane Mosley posed together in Pensacola, Florida, after Mosley's successful defense against outclassed Golden Johnson.

Photo by Frank Vitucci

My buddy, the heavybag: New WBA 154-pound champ David Reid poses with his favorite sparring partner, the one that doesn't hit back. Frenchman Laurent Boudouani did hit back, but not enough to prevent "The American Dream" from becoming the third '96 U.S. Olympian to win a world title.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

Then-heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson and two of his most famous rivals, Archie Moore and Ingemar Johansson, seem to be playing some sort of variation on the game "Scissors, Paper, Rock" in this photo. Unfortunately, taking time out to goof around with Moore and Johansson didn't help Patterson in his defense against Sonny Liston, for which he was training at the time.

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Lennox Lewis D 12 Evander Holyfield
(For Unified Title)
Ike Ibeabuchi KO 5 Chris Byrd
Kirk Johnson W 10 Al Cole
Hasim Rahman KO 5 Michael Rush
Lou Savarese W 10 Mount Whitaker
John Ruiz KO 4 Mario Cawley
Henry Akinwande KO 2 Reynaldo Minus
Larry Donald W 10 Artis Pendergrass
Obed Sullivan W 10 Biko Botowamungu
Danell Nicholson W 10 Frankie Swindell
James Toney KO 8 Terry Porter
Brian Nielsen KO 3 Peter McNeeley
Buster Douglas KO 1 Andre Crowder
Trevor Berbick KO 12 Shane Sutcliffe
Derrick Jefferson KO 2 Bert Cooper
Terrance Lewis W 8 Garing Lane
James Stanton W 10 Brian Nix
Nate Jones KO 1 Bryant Smith
Wolfgramm W 10 Gerard Jones

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Juan Carlos Gomez W 12
Marcelo Dominguez
(Retains WBC Title)
Kenny Keene KO 5 Dominic Carter
Montell Griffin KO 3 Randall Yonker
Vassiliy Jirov KO 1 Cesar Rondon
Dale Brown KO 2 Val Smith
Jorge Castro D 10 Miguel Angel Robledo
Alexei Iliin KO 10 Christophe Girard
Rich LaMontagne KO 3 Calvin Smith

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Reggie Johnson W 12 Will Taylor
(Retains IBF Title)
Glenn Robinson KO 6 Kenny Bowman
Omar Gonzalez W 10 Roberto Duran
Ole Klemetsen KO 4 Greg Scott-Briggs
Clinton Woods KO 8 Crawford Ashley
Glen Johnson KO 3 Armando Campas

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Sven Ottke KO 3 Giovanni Nardiello
(Retains IBF Title)
Mads Larsen KO 9 Sugarboy Malinga
Bryant Brannon W 12 Demetrius Jenkins
Eric Lucas W 10 Patrick Swann
Byron Mitchell KO 3 Carlos Sanabria
Dingaan Thobela KO 7 Adrian Daneff
Craig Cummings W 12 Jerry Brown
Bruno Girard KO 6 Rob Bleakley
Kabary Salem W 10 Joseph Laryea

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Robert McCracken KO 10 Steve Fisher
Alex Hilton W 10 Gerald Coleman
Giovanni Pretorius KO 3 Fernando Riera
Mario Iribarren KO 11 Augustine Caballero
Cornelius Carr W 12 Steve Foster

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
David Reid W 12 Laurent Boudouani
(Wins WBA Title)
Fernando Vargas KO 4 Howard Clarke
(Retains IBF Title)
Kirino Garcia W 12 Meldrick Taylor
Adrian Stone KO 2 Darren Covill
Tito Mendoza KO 5 Dwain Williams
Jason Matthews W Disq. 7 Paul Jones
Lavell Finger W 10 Kip Diggs
Tony Badea KO 5 Greg Johnson

WELTERWEIGHTS
James Page W 12 Sam Garr
(Retains WBA Title)
Daniel Santos KO 2 Ray Lovato
Antonio Diaz W 10 Juan Carlos Rodriguez
Danny Perez W 8 David Kamau
Ahmed Santos W 10 Ricky Quiles
Peter Malinga W 12 Naas Scheepers
Michele Piccirillo W 12 Sergio Acuna
Maxim Nesterenko KO 9
Stephane Cazeaux
Edgar Ruiz Tech. Win 9 Willy Wise
Jose Eschriche KO 9 Julio Cesar Soto
Greg Haugen W 8 Rudy Lovato

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
George Scott KO 4 Karl Taylor
Junior Witter KO 2 Malcolm Melvin
Steve Forbes W 10 Gustavo Tapia
Luis Perez KO 3 Andre Cray
Cory Spinks KO 1 John Stewart
David Diaz KO 6 Adam Leibowitz

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Stevie Johnston W 12 Cesar Bazan
(Regains WBC Title)
Israel Cardona KO 7 Joel Perez
Angel Manfredy KO 3 Ernesto Benitez
Colin Dunne W 12 Phillip Holiday
Artur Grigorijan W 12 Oscar Garcia Cano
John-John Molina KO 7 Ruben Nevarez
James Crayton KO 5 Javier Valadez
Lemuel Nelson W 12 Gilbert Salinas
Wilson Rodriguez W 12 Daniel Langerman
Bruno Wartelle W 10 Pedro Sarmiento

Michael Ayers KO 4 Luis Flores
Billy Irwin KO 2 David Armstrong
Daniel Attah KO 7 Michael Moss

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Carlos Navarro W 10 Darryl Pinckney
Antonio Hernandez KO 11 Justin Juuko
Walter Rodriguez W 10 Eduardo Morales
Joel Casamayor W 10 Russell Jones
Steve Robinson W 8 Santiago Rojas
Andrew Matabola KO 8 Dean Pithie
Koji Arisawa W 10 Nobutoshi Hiranaka

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Tony Wehbee KO 6 Lenny Martinez
John Jo Irwin W 12 Alex Moon
Augie Sanchez KO 2 Hector Santana

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
Paulie Ayala W 10 David Vazquez
Juan Carlos Ramirez W 10 Ricardo Medina
Michael Brodie KO 9 Salim Medjkoune
Jorge Lacierva W 12 Angel Almena
Lehlo Ledwaba KO 2 Maxim Pougatchev
Sergei Devakov KO 3 Vitali Yegorov

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Adan Vargas KO 5 Luis Rolon
Sandile Mentile W 12 Patrick Quka
Jose Rafael Sosa D 10 Taiji Okamoto
Rafael Marquez KO 6
Guadalupe Gastelum
Heriberto Ruiz W 10 Raul Juarez

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS
Yokthai Sithoar W 6 Felix Marfa
Eric Morel KO 7 Ysaias Zamudio
Michael Carbajal KO 6 Jose DeJesus
Jesper Jensen W 12 Julio Luna
Samson 3K Battery KO 3 Andy Alengio

FLYWEIGHTS
Leo Gamez KO 3 Hugo Soto
(Wins WBA Title)
Rosendo Alvarez W 10 Paulino Villalobos
Mike Trejo W 12 Tomas Rivera
Peter Culshaw W 12 Zolile Mbityi
Damaen Kelly W 12 Anthony Hanna
Isidro Garcia Tech. Draw 4 Antonio Ruiz
Jose Lopez Bueno KO 2 Morgan Ndumo
Celes Kobayashi KO 7 Hideyasu Ishihara

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS
Will Grigsby W 12 Carmelo Caceres
(Retains IBF Title)
Hawk Makepula W 12 Lorenzo Trejo

STRAWWEIGHTS
Stephen Msimanga D 12 Mawande Sineko

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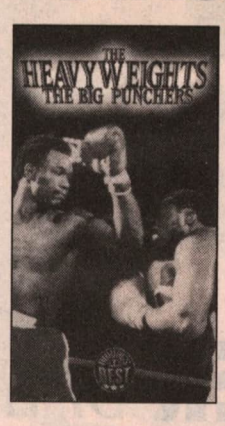

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

As outstanding as the performance Felix Trinidad turned in against Pernell Whitaker was, he wasn't the clear-cut winner of this month's top fighter honors. WBC heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis also demanded serious consideration by beating Evander Holyfield in the minds of all but two people in Madison Square Garden. When the displays of Trinidad and Lewis are put side-by-side, there's not much to separate them: Both won roughly eight or nine rounds out of 12; both defeated all-time great, but fading, champions; and both simply outboxed their opponents without coming close to scoring knockouts.

But IBF welterweight champ Trinidad edged Lewis out for two reasons. First, he fought an aggressive, exciting fight, as opposed to the cautious, often dull approach Lewis took. And second, he made history by becoming the first man in Whitaker's exceptional 44-fight career to decisively beat "Sweet Pea." Yes, Whitaker had slowed down, but he still fought with a lot more heart and energy than did Holyfield, and it just wasn't enough. This was Trinidad's first real test in over four years, and he reaffirmed his status as one of the best in the world by flooring Whitaker in the second round and dominating him from the middle rounds on. "Tito" wants Oscar De La Hoya, and after seeing this convincing win over Whitaker, the boxing fans want it just as bad.

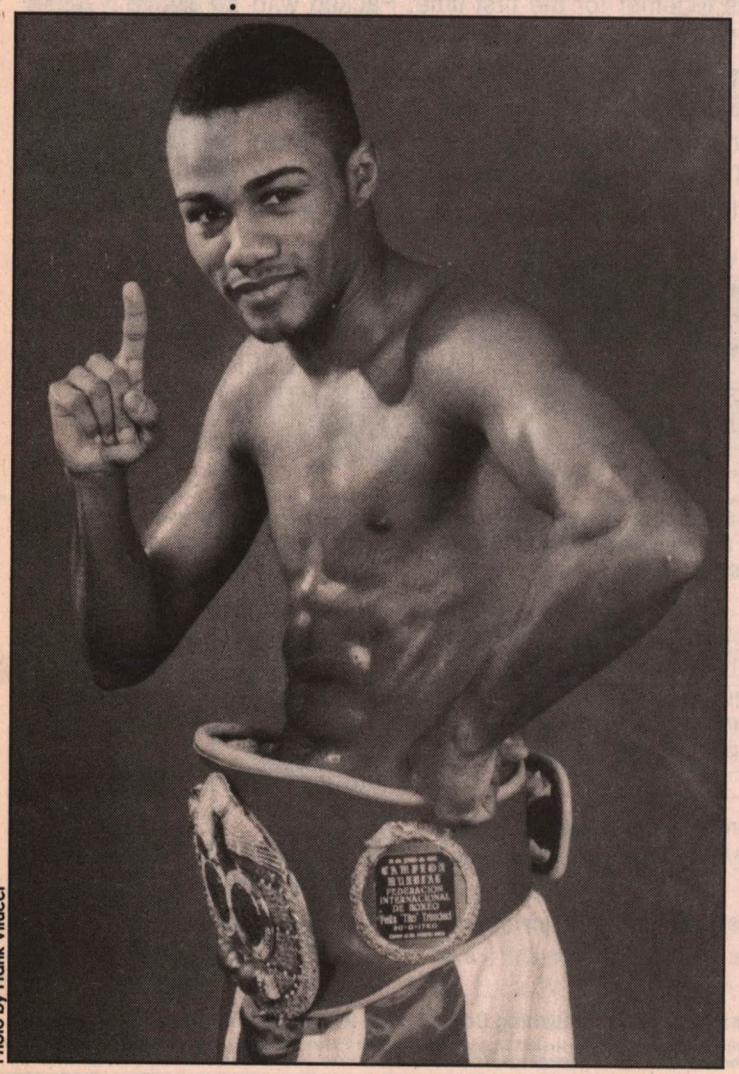
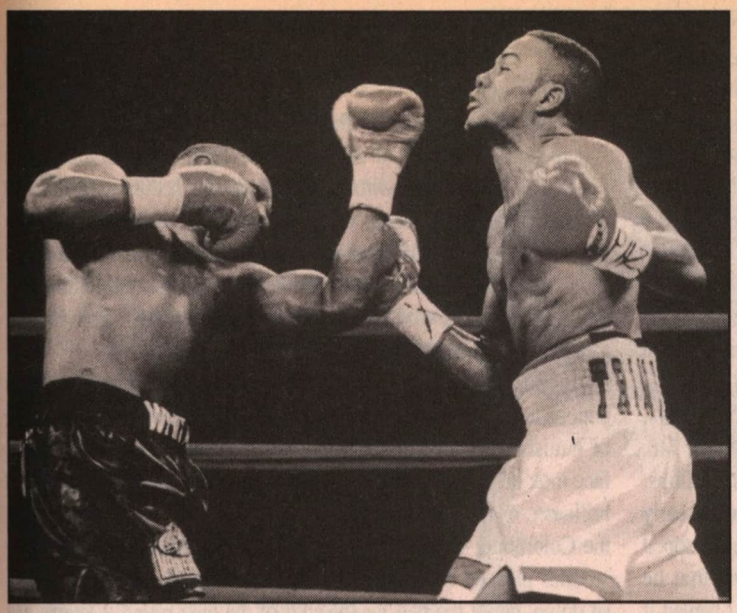


Photo by Frank Vitucci

• • • •

Felix Trinidad



This sharp Whitaker uppercut wasn't enough to prevent a Trinidad victory

Felix Trinidad W 12 Pernell Whitaker

New York, New York: IBF welterweight champion Trinidad provided the perfect lead-in for a super showdown with WBC counterpart Oscar De La Hoya by doing something "The Golden Boy" was unable to do: beat Whitaker convincingly. He floored "Sweet Pea" in the second, broke his jaw somewhere along the line (Lou Duva said it was the sixth round), and forced him to squat so low in the 10th and 12th rounds that, although referee Benji Esteves (USA) declined to do so, the third man would have been within his rights to issue a pair of eight-counts.

But despite Trinidad's impressive victory, Whitaker fought with courage and skill, giving almost as good as he got the first six rounds, and hanging tough with a busted jaw the second half of the fight. Surprisingly, it was Whitaker who assumed the role of the aggressor at the opening bell. He advanced on Trinidad in a flat-footed stance, snapping out his southpaw jab and occasionally sending home a sharp left. But all that changed in the second round when Trinidad lashed out with a counter right that smacked into Whitaker's jaw and sent him skidding across the ring floor on his rump.

Undaunted, the 35-year-old Whitaker went right back after Trinidad as soon as he picked himself up and had his gloves wiped on the ref's shirt. He continued to press the issue in the third and fourth, frequently getting off first and landing well on the inside with his left. Although age, drug and alcohol problems, and a lengthy layoff had robbed Whitaker of much of his speed and reflexes, his fighting heart shone though like never before.

But Trinidad, at the height of his powers at age 26, was not to be denied. With a shrieking, chanting, flag-waving crowd of 13,822 at Madison Square Garden cheering him on, he went after Whitaker in the fifth and landed several stiff rights. The sixth was another good round for the defending champ. He tagged Whitaker with a booming right, staggered him with a left hook, and then connected with another right. But just when it seemed that The Pea might be in serious trouble, "Tito" planted a punch well below the belt, and Whitaker crumpled to the canvas. Esteves called a time out and issued a warning, and by the time action resumed, Whitaker had recovered from both the legal headshots and the blow to the groin.

Whitaker landed his best punch of the fight in the seventh, a jolting counter that briefly shook Trinidad. It was the challenger's biggest round, and before it was over, he'd also connected with several uppercuts and another hard left.

The eighth was a corker. Trinidad staggered Whitaker with a left uppercut and followed with a pair of nasty-looking rights. Whitaker held briefly, and then fought back. And when Trinidad opened up with a prolonged barrage the last 20 seconds, Whitaker slugged back as best he could in bristling two-way action.

Whitaker had a decent round in the ninth, but the final three were all Trinidad. He augmented his steady flow of jabs, rights, and hooks with punishing bodyshots in the 10th and 11th, and upped the tempo of his attack to such a degree in the 12th that Whitaker had to again resort to squatting in a corner to survive.

At the final bell, Trinidad, 34-0 (29), raised his arms in triumph, while an exhausted Whitaker, 40-3-1 (17), draped his body across the ropes for support. And even though he said afterward that he thought he won, in his heart, Sweet Pea had to know it wasn't so.

Both Robert Exton (USA) and Melvina Lathan (USA), scored the bout 118-109 for Trinidad, while Samuel Conde (Puerto Rico) had it 117-110. THE RING scored it considerably closer, but still had Trinidad the winner, by a 115-113 margin.

"I'm the best welterweight in the world," said Trinidad. "Oscar has to prove to me that he's better, if he can. I'll fight him any time, anywhere."

We can't wait.

Television: HBO

Promoter: Don King

(2-20-99)

Nigel Collins

Terronn Millett KO 5 Vince Phillips

New York, New York: Boxing insiders seem to enjoy joking about Phillips' weight problems. The IBF junior welterweight champion was so notorious for blowing up between fights, Roy Jones comment-

Photo by Frank Vitucci

Weary Phillips rocks back after a left from Millett

ed on HBO during the first Arturo Gatti-Ivan Robinson fight that the similarly troubled Gatti is "up there hanging out with Vince Phillips." The idea that Phillips could walk around at 180 pounds and fight so effectively at 140 was so absurd, you had to shake your head and laugh. But by the time he stepped into the ring at Madison Square Garden for his mandatory defense against Millett, "Cool Vince's" struggles with the scale were no longer a joke. They had made him a lifeless, off-balance shell of the man who had knocked out Kostya Tszyu less than two years earlier.

And the 30-year-old Millett, a competent, determined fighter who had survived having a bullet lodged in his back seven years earlier to find himself in the right place at the right time for this title shot, took full advantage. From the opening bell, Millett, 140, St. Louis, Missouri, was scoring easily with his snapping jab, and Phillips, 140, Pensacola, Florida, was wobbling every time he was hit. Phillips, making his fourth title defense, enjoyed his only strong moment early in the second, when a right-hand counter tagged Millett and dropped him momentarily to a knee. Millett later acknowledged that he thought it was a knockdown, but referee Jim Santa (USA) waved it off and ruled it a slip. Millett then came alive, tagging Phillips with wild, flush shots that the champion couldn't avoid, while tasting more than a few of Phillips' bombs himself.

The furious pace continued in the third, and the drained Phillips' vulnerability showed when he was floored by a perfect right hand that landed just as the bell sounded. Cool Vince got up at seven, winked at his opponent, and mouthed the words, "Good shot," but it was the 35-year-old Phillips who was looking good and shot by this point. He had reportedly lost 47 pounds in seven weeks of training, and he clearly had nothing left. Millett opened the fourth with a strong three-punch combination, then two rights and a left later in the round dropped the champion hard. He got up and tried to hold, but was nearly decked again by a right hand at the bell.

The exciting back-and-forth of the earlier rounds had become terribly one-sided, and when Millett landed two colossal lefts in the fifth—the first one snapping Phillips' head back, the second sending him staggering across the ring—Santa stepped in and stopped it. The entertained crowd booed, and Phillips, 39-4 (28), dropped his to knees incredulously, but even if the stoppage wasn't perfectly timed, it was clear that real danger was imminent. The end came at the 1:58 mark.

"God's truly blessed me," Millett, 21-1-1 (16), said afterward. "God's put me through a lot of things, and I survived. I should be dead or maybe paralyzed. I guess you can say that was a miracle, winning the title."

The new champion may need another miracle just to make it through his first title defense. His mandatory challenger is "interim" champ Zab Judah, one of the most highly touted young stars in the sport.

Promoter: Don King

(2-20-99)

Eric Raskin

Vuyani Bungu KO 7 Victor Llerena

Hammanskraal, South Africa: Bungu, 121½, South Africa, retained the IBF junior featherweight title for the 13th time when mandatory challenger Llerena, 121¾, Colombia, quit on his stool at the bell to begin the eighth round before a crowd of 4,000 on a humid evening at the Carousel Gambling Resort. The two had met once previously, with Bungu capturing a 12-round decision in his third title defense in April '95.

In the opening round, neither boxer landed any effective punches. But in the last minute of round two, Bungu, 31, took control and never lost it, punching with too much power, accuracy, and variety for the ineffective Llerena, who was throwing punches from too far out and was unable to penetrate the tight defense of the champion. The Colombian had no answer for the right crosses and left hooks of the shorter Bungu, who constantly switched his attack from the head to the body and back again.

In rounds four, five, and six, the challenger was jolted by combinations to the head and body. Then, in round seven, the accumulation of punishment—especially to the body—took its toll, as Llerena's face took on a desperate look with a half-minute to go. The speed and brilliance of the champion was bewildering Llerena, and at the bell, the Colombian went to his corner and started shaking his head. His seconds pleaded with him to go on and eventually convinced him to sit down, but at the bell for the start of the next round, Llerena, 22-2 (16), remained on his stool a completely beaten fighter.

Bungu, 37-2 (19), broke Brian Mitchell's record for the most consecutive world title defenses by a South African fighter with the win, and ranks second among junior feather champs behind only the 17 defenses of Wilfredo Gomez. Another milestone was reached on the momentous evening when South African referee Stanley Christodoulou officiated in his 100th world title fight (87 as a ref, 13 as a judge).

Promoter Rodney Berman stated after the fight that Bungu would be seeking a fight at featherweight with Naseem Hamed, which Berman hopes to stage in England this July. Bungu had since relinquished the IBF title in order to make a fight with "The Prince" possible.

(2-6-99)

Ron Jackson

Erik Morales KO 2 Angel Chacon

Las Vegas, Nevada: With the kind of TNT power Morales carries in either fist, he doesn't mind playing a waiting game to set up an

Chacon topples through the ropes after a brutal kayo shot by Morales

adversary. The perfect illustration of both his patience and his potency arrived when the WBC super bantamweight champion finished off Chacon with a sudden explosion in the second round of a 12-round title defense on the Oscar De La Hoya-Ike Quartey undercard at the Thomas & Mack Center.

Morales, 121½, Mexico, made his fifth title defense a spectacular one when he knocked Chacon, 122, Puerto Rico, onto the ring apron with a vicious right hand, prompting referee Richard Steele (USA) to waive off a count at 1:52 of the round. Morales, 22, earned $200,000, while Chacon, 27, collected $40,000 for his troubles.

The opener was a cautious round for both boxers, but Chacon did enough with light jabs to get the round on two of the judges' cards. Morales started round two as an intent stalker, still patient, but looking for an opening. Using quick combinations, the champion backed Chacon into a corner. Leaving the Puerto Rican with no avenue for escape, Morales whacked him with a potent right uppercut. Morales pressed, catching his rival with a left and a lightning right to the jaw. Chacon crumpled, and caught two more lefts as he started a roll through the ropes and onto the ring apron. The challenger was out cold as Steele called it off. It was nearly three minutes before a badly dazed Chacon, 24-3 (14), had any idea where he was.

"This is really an event in Las Vegas. I really wanted to make a big statement," Morales, 32-0 (26), said in the postfight wrapup. "That's why I decided to go for the early knockout."

Chacon, who lost by decision to Antonio Cermeno in a bid to take the WBA 122-pound title in 1997, had never been knocked down before in his six-year pro career. He also told his cornermen, "Nobody has ever hit me as hard as Morales. I didn't see that big right coming."

Television: TVKO
Promoter: Top Rank
(2-13-99)
Jack Welsh

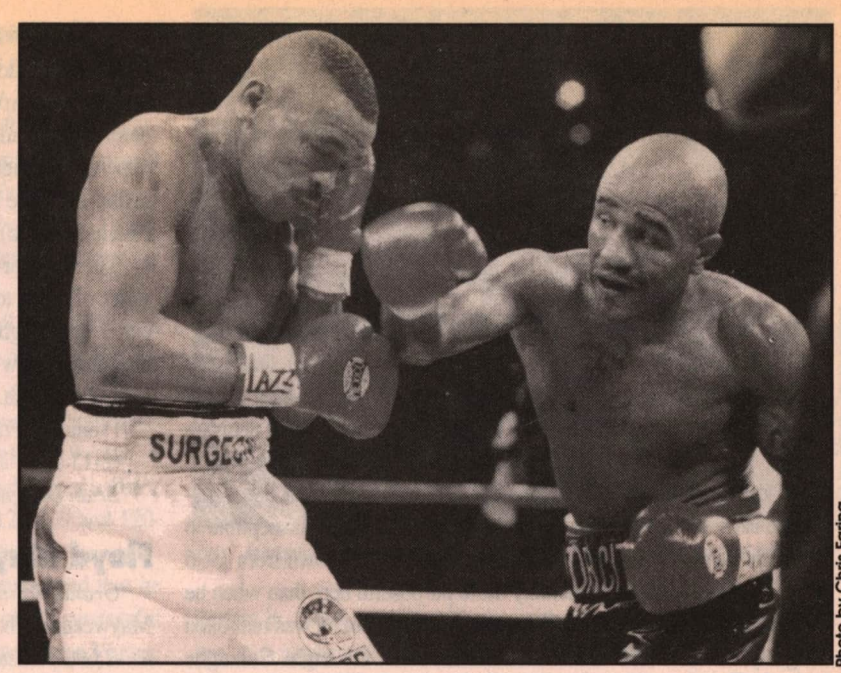


Photo by Chris Farina

Carr was constantly a punch ahead of Randall

Oba Carr W 10 Frankie Randall

Las Vegas, Nevada: The well-travelled axiom, "The third time's a charm," was applicable to both fighters going into this 10-round elimination bout. Carr, 26, came up short in two chances at world welterweight titles, while Randall, 37, won and lost the WBC 140-pound crown against Julio Cesar Chavez and had a similar series with Juan Coggi for WBA honors. Both men had to know this outing could be the final inning at the top for the loser.

If Randall grew confident watching Carr struggle to an eight-round decision over Verdell Smith last November, it was a costly miscalculation. Carr, 148, Detroit, Michigan, was as finely tuned as some of the famous autos in his native city, scoring with unrelenting combinations to the head and body that rarely let Randall, 146, Nashville, Tennessee, get untracked in losing a unanimous decision at the Thomas & Mack Center.

Shortly after Oscar De La Hoya kept his title on a split decision over Ike Quartey in the card's main event, Arum announced that Carr would challenge the unbeaten "Golden Boy" on May 22 at the Mandalay Bay resort/casino. While both Carr and Randall were paid only $100,000 to face each other, Carr will now earn in excess of $2.5-million to face De La Hoya.

After dropping the first stanza, Randall did win the second round with Carr content to test the old pro with head and shoulder feints and sporadic jabs. Carr picked up the tempo in round three, whacking his adversary with stinging hooks to the ribs. Carr was out quick in the fourth with two rights to the head. Randall clinched, but could not thwart the Motor City rep's pressure, as Carr backed him into a corner and scored heavily with combinations. Randall was just a shell of the fighter who knocked down Chavez in the 11th round en route to handing the Mexican great his first loss five years earlier.

Randall's frustration was etched in his face every time he did catch Carr open for a counter and his reflexes betrayed him. Carr won the fifth and sixth rounds, and maintained heavy pressure in the seventh, opening with an unanswered six-punch salvo that shook Randall. The gutsy Tennessee warrior clinched at mid-ring after taking a three-punch volley. As referee Joe Cortez (USA) tried to part the men, Randall finally found the range and unloaded his best right of the night. Carr took it on the chin and skidded on his trunks. What appeared to be a 10-8 round for Randall was nullified when Cortez penalized him one point for hitting on the break and disallowed the knockdown.

Randall reached deep for enough energy to win the ninth and 10th rounds as Carr elected to stick and move, taking no risk to get tagged with a legitimate bomb. In the judges' official scoring, Duane Ford (USA) and Jerry Roth (USA) both saw it 97-92 while Bill Graham (USA) voted 99-90, all for Carr. THE RING's tab was 98-91. If this night was to be Randall's Auld Lang Syne, he will leave the sport with a still gaudy 55-6-1 (42) ledger. Carr upped his record to 48-2-1 (28).

"This was one of the biggest fights of my career because of what it leads to," Carr said afterward. "It will be my third title

shot, and I know I'll be a helluva lot smarter than I was in the first two. No argument, Oscar is a great champion. But I'm very confident I can give him more jabs and movement than Quartey did. It will be a great fight."

Television: TVKO
Promoter: Top Rank
(2-13-99)
Jack Welsh

Joe Calzaghe W 12 Robin Reid

Newcastle, England: Inviting a lot more punishment than need have been, Calzaghe, 167, Wales, held tough over 12 hard-fought rounds against a spirited Reid, 167¾, England, to earn a split decision in this battle of British super middleweights at the TeleWest Arena.

Calzaghe, 26, was not helped by an injury to his left hand sustained early in the fifth, but was nonetheless alarmingly susceptible to the right hand of Reid, a brief claimant to the WBC crown from 1996 to '97. Reid, 27, was considerably more purposeful here than when he surrendered the WBC title to Sugarboy Malinga, but he was outboxed slightly nevertheless. Even so, at the end of the night Calzaghe described his performance as his "worst ever."

The Welshman opened tentatively, seeking out openings from long range, but missing with a number of lefts from his southpaw stance. Reid, 26-2-1 (19), got through with a right and left hook in the opening round, and pierced Calzaghe's guard in the second with a right and a series of solid jabs. Calzaghe replied to the body and relaxed in the third to demonstrate his acknowledged boxing ability.

In the fourth, Reid landed a tremendous right that forced Calzaghe, 26-0 (23), to hold on, and he increased the tempo in the fifth and sixth as he began to take charge. Referee Roy Francis (England) took a point off Reid in the eighth for a low blow, but he rebounded strongly in the ninth and 10th. Calzaghe managed to regroup, and fell back on his trusted jab to claim the final two rounds and victory.

American judges Robert Byrd and John Duggan scored 116-111 for Calzaghe, while Britain's Paul Thomas had it by the same margin the other way. THE RING scored 115-112 for Calzaghe.

"At the moment, I don't think Joe's a headline fighter in America," opined Showtime boxing Executive Producer Jay Larkin.

Promoter: Frank Warren
(2-13-99)
Brian Doogan

Richie Woodhall KO 6 Vincenzo Nardiello

Newcastle, England: With only one brief bad moment to endure in an otherwise straightforward affair, Woodhall, 167, England, stopped temperamental mandatory challenger Nardiello, 168, Italy, in six rounds at the TeleWest Arena. It was his second defense of the WBC super middleweight title he wrested from Sugarboy Malinga.

Nardiello, who had to sweat off several pounds to make weigh put Woodhall down with a left counter in the fifth, but was in no co dition to sustain any effort. Woodhall, 25-1 (15), was up at three, an before the round was out, had Nardiello, 33-7 (19), down with a rig uppercut and right to the midsection. The Italian rose at nine, initiate action after the bell, and went down crying "foul" at referee Lup Garcia (Mexico), but was ordered up and out for the next round.

The 30-year-old Woodhall finished the job in the sixth with series of rights to the body and a right to the jaw. Nardiello, 32, clan bered up at eight, but was impotent against the followup salvo, an his corner threw in the towel as the referee intervened. The time wa 1:44 of the sixth.

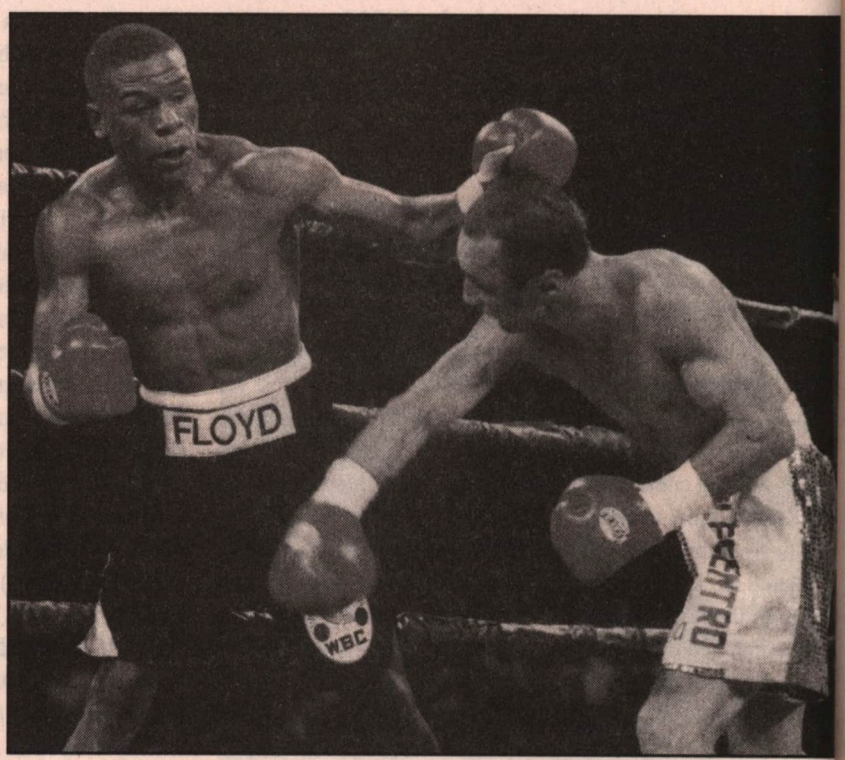
Promoter: Frank Warren
(2-13-99)
Brian Doogan

Floyd Mayweather W 12 Carlos Rios

Grand Rapids, Michigan: WBC super lightweight champio Mayweather's homecoming was both an artistic and financial succes as 12,696 partisans filled the Van Andel Arena to the rafters to wat the local hero win a unanimous 12-round decision over cemen chinned challenger Rios. It was the second defense of the title th Mayweather had won by stopping Genaro Hernandez in Octob 1998.

Rios, 129, didn't have the speed or boxing skill to be Mayweather, but he gave it a helluva try, unflinchingly wading in the champion's best shots, round after round, in a courageous b futile attempt to take the title. Although the craggy-faced veter from Santa Fe, Argentina, didn't win a round on THE RING's scor card, his awkward swings caught "Pretty Boy" often enough to kee him honest and make the fight entertaining.

Two rounds stand out: In the closing moments of the second, th



Rios bravely flails away, but Mayweather's just too good

went toe-to-toe and traded punches at a frenzied rate, as the crowd roared its approval. Fans were on their feet again in the 11th when it looked like Mayweather, 130, would finally stop his man. Combination after combination rained down on Rios, repeatedly snapping his head back on his shoulders. It was such a dominant round, THE RING and two of the three official judges gave Mayweather a 10-8 margin. But the 27-year-old Rios, 44-3-1 (29), defiantly stayed on his feet, and still had enough left to answer the bell for the final round and last the distance.

"He just wouldn't go," said Mayweather, 20-0 (15). "He's as tough as nails, man. I tried my best to get him out of there. But the main thing is to win."

Oddly enough, Michigan judge Robert Watson was the only arbitrator to give Rios a round, scoring the fight 119-109 in Mayweather's favor. Luis Guzman (Argentina) and Gelasio Perez (Mexico) both scored a shutout for the champion, 120-109 and 120-110, respectively. The referee was Dale Grable (USA).

Before the fight, the 21-year-old Mayweather announced that he has set his sights on topping Joe Louis' record of 25 successful defenses. He'll try for number three on May 22 against Goyo Vargas, the former WBC featherweight champion.

Television: TNT

Promoter: Top Rank

(2-17-99)

Reggie Johnson W 12 Will Taylor

Miami, Florida: Johnson's performance at Miccosukee Indian Gaming will not make the highlight reel of his 15-year, 45-fight career. Nonetheless, he recorded his second defense of the IBF light heavyweight title with a workmanlike performance against mandatory challenger Taylor.

Johnson, 32, opened the fight with a rushing style, trying to intimidate and overwhelm his less-experienced opponent. Johnson's sweeping, southpaw offerings often missed their mark, but he kept Taylor on the defensive early on. Taylor, who at 6'3" towered over the 5'10" champion, opened the fight as a right-hander, but fought the next three rounds as a southpaw. You never knew from one round to the next whether Taylor would answer the bell in an orthodox or lefty stance.

He lost the first four rounds on the official scorecards as Johnson piled up points with solid combination punching to Taylor's head and elongated midsection. Johnson, 172, Houston, Texas, rocked Taylor in round four with a left hand to the head. Johnson could not have known it then, but this good work early would be the key to victory.

Taylor, 173, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, became more aggressive and switched back to a right-handed attack to sweep the fifth round on the official scorecards. Both fighters were successful to the body, but Taylor bothered Johnson with a pair of right hands downstairs. Midway through the fight, Johnson was up by margins of four, four, and two points.

The remaining six rounds were practically evenly split between the fighters as Taylor accelerated and Johnson decelerated. Taylor scored with right hands to Johnson's body and head, but the champion did enough to maintain the lead he'd built up in the opening rounds. The final six rounds were so close that the three ringside judges agreed on only one of them: the 12th, in which referee Max

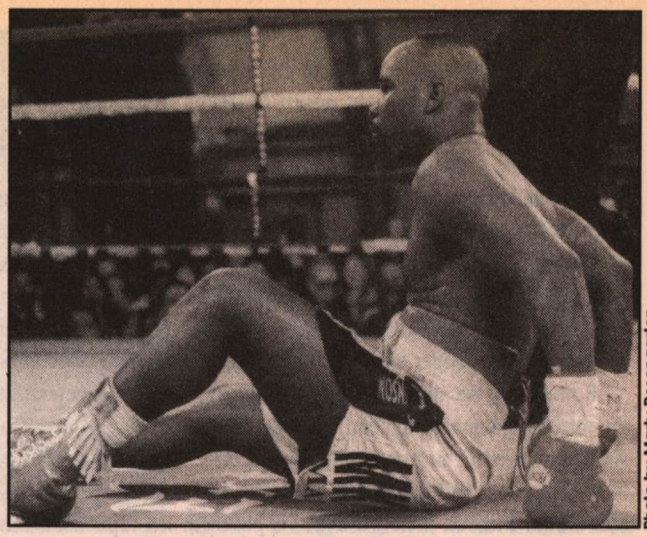


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Johnson had to get off the floor in the 12th to retain the IBF title

Parker Jr. (USA) credited Taylor with a knockdown. Taylor, boxing as a southpaw, caught Johnson with a right hand to the head. Johnson was off-balance and slipped to the canvas, but Taylor had landed enough leather to earn the knockdown. Later in the round, Johnson sustained a cut over his right eye. Taylor captured the final round 10-8 across the board. The final tallies were 115-112 from judges Kason Cheeks (USA) and Mark Streisand (USA), and 114-113 from Peter Trematerra (USA).

"I was off-balance when he knocked me down, but it was definitely a legitimate knockdown," the champion said. Johnson, 39-5-1 (24), had not fought since making his initial title defense last May with a 12-round decision win over Ole Klemetson, as he suffered a torn right rotator cuff in that fight. "I wasn't my sharpest. I couldn't go right back to the gym after my last fight because of my injury. All the time, I've been recovering from my injury; it's been a real process."

Some boxing experts questioned how well Taylor would fare against Johnson in light of his relative inexperience and lack of world-class opponents on his resume. But Taylor, 15-2 (11), showed good skills and considerable poise in going the distance with Johnson and battling on equal terms for most of the fight. He just gave away too many rounds early. Even so, Taylor said, "I really thought I had the title won after the knockdown. I showed that I am a champion as well."

Television: HBO

Promoter: Top Rank

(2-27-99)

Ken Knox

Takanori Hatakeyama D 12 Saul Duran

Tokyo, Japan: Unbeaten Japanese Hatakeyama, 130, barely kept the WBA super featherweight title as he came off the canvas in the second, furiously fought at close range thereafter, and drew with Mexican Duran, 129½, at Ariake Coliseum. The scores were as follows: Lou Tabat (USA) 114-111 for Hatakeyama, Ferdinando Estrella (Philippines) 116-113 for Duran, and Gustavo Padilla (Panama) 113-113. THE RING had the same total as Tabat.

It was Hatakeyama's first defense since he dethroned Korean Yong Soo Choi on a hard-fought decision last September. The

hard-hitting Japanese speedster got off to a good start with sharp jabs and left-right combinations in the opening session, but Duran covered up effectively. From out of nowhere, the champ hit the deck late in the second after a well-timed jab by Duran. It was a flash knockdown, but it caused Hatakeyama's corner to abruptly change his fight plan and make him fight aggressively at close quarters from the third round on.

The third saw Hatakeyama, 23, pin the Mexican to the ropes with a barrage of punches. Duran continued to cover himself up well and occasionally attempted to counter the willing mixer. The 25-year-old challenger took the fourth with sharp combinations.

It gradually became a war between the aggressive infighter and the retreating counterpuncher. The champ was in command in the sixth and seventh, as he cornered Duran, 27-3-1 (21), with a fusillade of punches and had him at bay. The 10th saw Australian referee Derek Milham penalize Duran a point for his repeated holding to avert Hatakeyama's assault, and he took another point from the Mexican in the 11th for his repeated low blows.

By the 12th round, both contestants were fading. When the fight was over, the crowd seemed confident the champ had triumphed, but the official verdict, a split draw, stunned the crowd as well as Hatakeyama.

Hatakeyama, 22-0-2 (17), is obligated to meet the WBA's top contender, Lakva Sim of Mongolia, in his next defense.

Promoter: Kyoei Promotions

(2-13-99)

Joe Koizumi

Pichitnoi C. Siriwat W 12 Joma Gamboa

Sanui, Thailand: Fast-moving lefty Siriwat, 108, withstood a crisis in the fourth and outmaneuvered hard-hitting Filipino Gamboa, 108, to defend the WBA junior flyweight title on a 12-round unanimous decision in a makeshift ring at Chaweng Beach. It was Siriwat's fourth defense.

Each contestant entered the ringside area riding an elephant. They respected each other in the first three sessions, but the power-punching Gamboa looked stiff, aiming at a quick kayo win. The Thailander threw a few more punches than the Filipino to take the opening rounds.

The fourth round saw Gamboa catch the champ with a right-left-right combination that had him reeling, with only the ropes keeping him up. Gamboa followed up to punish the champ, but Siriwat utilized his footwork and attempted to fight back with straight lefts to the belly.

Gamboa complained of the champ's low blows in the fifth, and referee Waldemar Schmidt (Puerto Rico) stopped the proceedings and gave a brief break to the challenger. In the seventh, Gamboa turned aggressive and pinned the champ to the ropes with sharp combos to the face. But from the eighth onward, Siriwat was moving well to avert Gamboa's vaunted punches. The Filipino maintained the pressure, but failed to catch the moving target. In the last two rounds, Gamboa realized that he was behind on points and attempted to score a knockout, but he just couldn't catch the fleet-footed southpaw.

"Though I took good shots in the fourth, I had the confidence to control the fight thereafter," Siriwat said, and the judges agreed that he had done the better work. Erkki Meronen (Finland) had it 118-112, Melchor Taylor (Trinidad) saw it 118-110, and Hiroyuki Tezaki (Japan) scored it 116-112, all for Siriwat, 21-1 (12). Gamboa, a year his senior at 25, dropped to 25-4-1 (19). The loser said afterward that he intended to fight at 105 pounds in the future.

Promoter: Songchai Ratanasuban

(2-20-99)

Joe Koizumi

Sven Ottke KO 3 Giovanni Nardiello

Berlin, Germany: Barely required to work up a sweat, Ottke, 167, Germany, retained the IBF super middleweight title with a third-round knockout of Nardiello, 168, Italy, bringing an almost merciful halt to a totally lopsided fight. It was the German's first defense of the crown he claimed unexpectedly from American Charles Brewer last October.

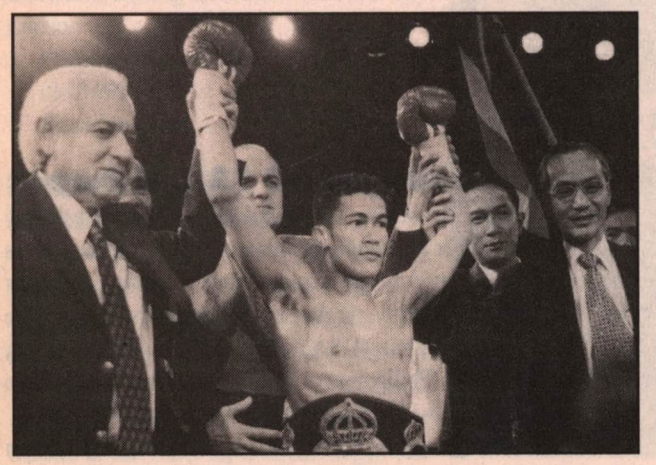
Unexpected is how most people would view Ottke stopping a guy. In 14 professional fights, he has managed it only twice. But Nardiello, whose brother Vincenzo was kayoed by Richie Woodhall in a bid for the WBC super middleweight two weeks earlier, was so hopelessly outclassed from the opening bell that an early night became inevitable, and the finishing flurry was not required to be destructively overwhelming.

Ottke had Nardiello down twice with right hands, the second sending the Italian into the ropes and out cold. The referee counted the overmatched challenger out at 2:02 of the third.

"It's unusual for me to be having an early shower, but I guess even I'm capable of a lucky punch," quipped Ottke in self-deprecating fashion. "I prepared well as I always do and was in shape to go the distance if necessary, but I didn't have time to show what I wanted."

The 31-year-old German, a former European amateur champion, wasted no time in seizing control. He peppered Nardiello with fast and eye-catching combinations from the opening bell, and before the round was out, the Italian challenger's right eye had swelled. Nardiello, 17-3-1 (6), was kept at bay by Ottke's tight defense and landed nothing to encourage his hopes, or those of his small band of compatriots in the staunchly German crowd, of bringing the title back home to Italy.

Halfway through the third, the end was in sight. Ottke, 14-0 (2), caught his man with a solid right that propelled him into the



WBA 108-pound champ Siriwat celebrates points win over Gamboa

Photo by Chris Farina

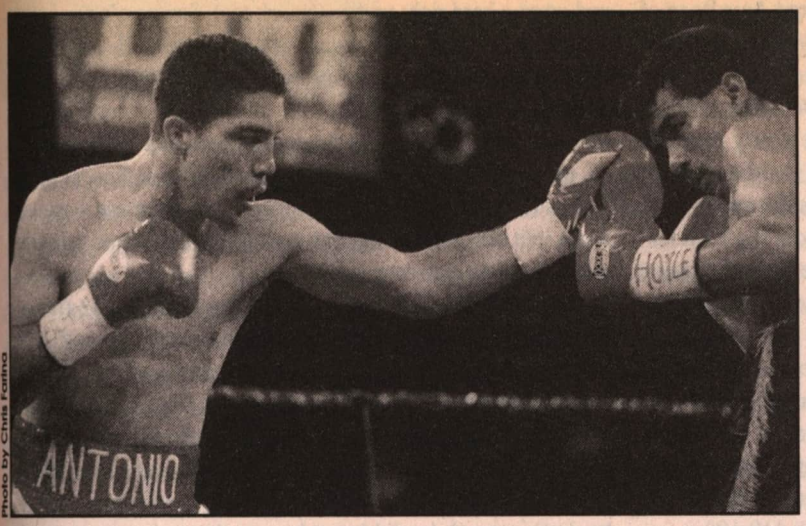


Photo by Chris Farina

Diaz fires a jab en route to stunningly quick knockout of Lucero

ropes before he sagged to the canvas. He sprang up quickly, but Ottke opened up with both hands and picked him off at will, knocking Nardiello into the ropes again with a right hand that seemed to catch him suspiciously toward the back of the head. The Italian was already on the way out anyway, and he lay unconscious for several minutes before being hospitalized briefly.

Promoter: Sauerland Promotions

(2-27-99)

Brian Doogan

Antonio Diaz KO 2 Mauro Lucero

Las Vegas, Nevada: Whether they are at ringside or watching it on TV at home, boxing junkies are fast getting the message that if you want to see Diaz' slick handiwork, be early and don't leave your seat. The 22-year-old Diaz, 140, Coachella, California, did it again in one of the most significant wins of his young career, knocking out the more-experienced Lucero, 139, Mexico, 52 seconds into the second round at the Orleans hotel-casino.

The swift, 5'9" boxer-puncher needed 12 rounds to TKO the rugged Hector Quiroz in a street war last September, and has gone the full dozen only once—when he decisioned Cory Spinks last December. In this fight, on paper at least, it appeared Diaz, 25-2 (19), would be thoroughly tested by Lucero, 34-4-1 (20). In his last effort, Lucero went 12 hard rounds before losing to then-WBC lightweight champ Cesar Bazan.

It was a brisk opening round, with both gladiators trading heavy combinations along the ropes and in the middle of the ring. In the second, Diaz backed up Lucero with snapping jabs and then made him blink from two hard rights. Suddenly, Diaz stepped in and caught Lucero flush on the jaw with a searing right. The impact of the blow made much of the crowd of 1,600 gasp. Lucero never knew what hit him, slowly sagging to his knees and then pitching over face down on the canvas. Referee Jay Nady's (USA) 10-count was a formality. Lucero remained unconscious for several minutes, but ringside physician Flip Homansky deemed Lucero "okay" once he was revived.

Diaz was elated over what he called his biggest victory as a pro.

"I knew Lucero was a very good fighter and very tough," Diaz said. "I trained very hard for this fight, but I never thought it would be so short, no way the second round. I wasn't very happy with my fight with Cory Spinks, but for this one, I was well prepared and well-dedicated."

Television: ESPN2

Promoter: Top Rank

(2-12-99)

Jack Welsh

Will Grigsby W 12 Carmelo Caceres

Minneapolis, Minnesota: The state of Minnesota has waited nearly a century for a world champion, so the crowd of 4,136—including Gov. Jesse Ventura—at the University of Minnesota Women's Sports Pavilion was roaring with excitement as St. Paul native Grigsby entered the ring to defend the IBF junior flyweight title for the first time. After both the American national anthem and that of number-13 contender Caceres' homeland, the Philippines, had been played, however, the crowd grew confused and silent as trainer Dennis Presley led Grigsby back to the dressing room. There turned out to be a problem with the ring supports, and after a delay of about 25 minutes to make the repair, the bout got underway.

The 28-year-old Grigsby, 106½, took control from the start of the first round, working behind a stiff left jab. He gave the challenger a lot of lateral movement, landing a few sharp combinations to the body and head, but caused no serious damage in the first four rounds. By the fifth round, however, the 25-year-old Caceres, 105, seemed slightly leery of the champion's power, giving Grigsby the ability to feint him at will. It was evident that Grigsby was getting stronger with time, and Caceres, a

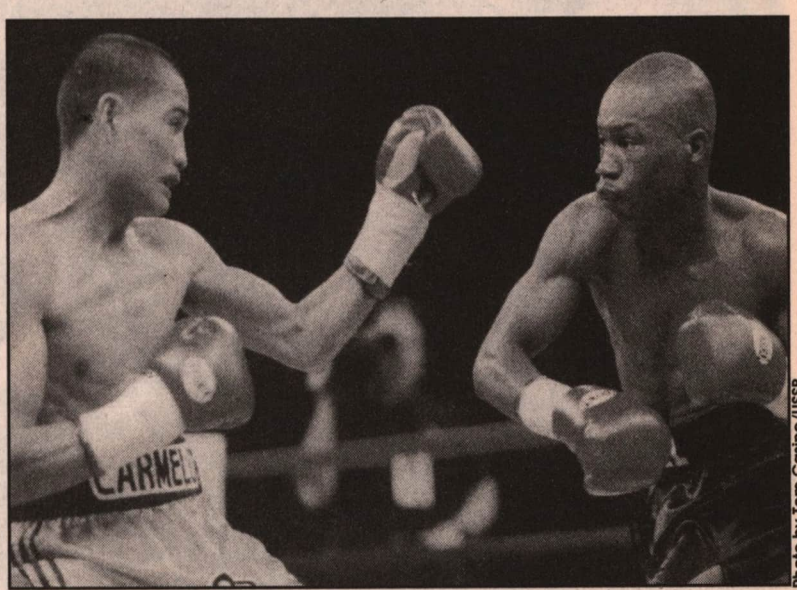


Photo by Tom Casino/USSB

Minnesota's Grigsby puts the pressure on Caceres

mid-week replacement flown in after fifth-ranked Anis Roga of Indonesia was unable to travel due to visa problems, appeared to be getting weaker.

In the sixth, Grigsby landed a stiff one-two, stepped back, and caught Caceres with a hard left jab that nearly dropped him. Caceres pulled back a little too far in avoiding one of Grigsby's left hooks near the end of the round, tripping and falling to the canvas, but it was rightfully ruled a slip by referee Denny Nelson (USA). By the end of the seventh, however, Caceres proved he was determined, trading combinations with the champion. And after fighting passionately in the eighth, it appeared that Caceres had won his first round of the night.

Grigsby controlled the last four rounds, following a one-two in the 12th with a left hook to drop the challenger, but he was unable to put Caceres, 16-5-3 (3), away. Judge Mike Ancona (USA) and Lindsey Tucker (USA) both scored it 120-107 for the champion, and Mark Nelson (USA) scored it 119-108.

"He was a good counter puncher and threw a lot of punches on the inside," Grigsby said, "but as long as I stayed on the outside, he couldn't mess with me." Grigsby, 14-1-1 (6), also said he hurt his right hand in the sixth or seventh round, and believed the injury prevented him from scoring a knockout.

Television: USSB

Promoter: Don King

(3-6-99)

Mark Connor

Lou Savarese W 10 Mount Whitaker

Atlantic City, New Jersey: A huge right hand crashed down on Savarese's temple. He staggered back a step, and another right found the mark, followed by a flush left. There was still one minute, 20 seconds remaining in the sixth round, and as the gigantic Whitaker opened up and started bombing away, the 33-year-old Savarese's hopes of remaining a factor in the heavyweight division were vanishing. Nearly 40 more powerpunches landed, and when a hard right to the stomach took Savarese's wind away, he made a decision that probably saved his career: He took a knee.

Rather than being too proud and stubborn to go down, Savarese was too aware not to, and the 10-second reprieve allowed him to last through the round. And once that bell sounded, the Bronx, New York, heavyweight was home free, as the 26-year-old Whitaker had virtually nothing left. Savarese went on to win a split decision in a fight he had fairly well in hand, other than the sixth-round massacre.

The first five rounds at the Atlantic City Boardwalk Convention Center Ballroom were relatively uneventful, but Savarese, 245, stalked Whitaker, 249, and bullied him along the ropes enough to build a healthy lead. The inexperienced Whitaker, whose only noteworthy fight going in was a seventh-round kayo of Alex Stewart, showed pitiful technique, flicking with his jab and flailing harmlessly with a paintbrush-like left hook. One punch he did know how to throw, however, was the right uppercut, and he used several of those in the second round to get off the ropes and win the stanza on all three scorecards. But as Whitaker, Granada Hills, California, threw with no conviction in the third, fourth, and fifth rounds, Savarese, who kept moving forward and working the body, pulled into the lead.

There was a point of controversy in the brutal sixth, a round in which Whitaker landed 58 of an astounding 122 punches, most of them powershots. As referee Steve Smoger (USA) laid the count on Savarese after a knockdown, he quietly encouraged Savarese to get up, which the New Yorker barely did before he reached 10. Whitaker's trainer, Joe Goossen, immediately jumped up and screamed that Savarese hadn't beaten the count—which replays showed he had—but an argument that Smoger was verbally helping the fighter along wouldn't have been so unjustified.

Savarese, 39-2 (32), was back in control in the seventh, as Whitaker could hardly get his arms moving, and the more experienced fighter landed an excellent right uppercut-left hook combination. The eighth was much closer, as the 6'8" Whitaker, 18-1 (16), got his uppercut working again, but the ninth was all Savarese. Whitaker, whose left eye was cut in the fifth, was dealing with significant swelling around the eye by the end, but he nonetheless took the 10th on two cards. Still, Savarese's more consistent work paid off in the end, as Alan Rubenstein (USA) and Paul Venti (USA) both had it for the crowd favorite by scores of 97-93 and 95-93, respectively, while Al DeVito (USA) edged it to Whitaker, 95-94. THE RING scored the bout even at 95-95.

Television: HBO

Promoters: America Presents, Cedric Kushner Promotions

(3-6-99)

Eric Raskin

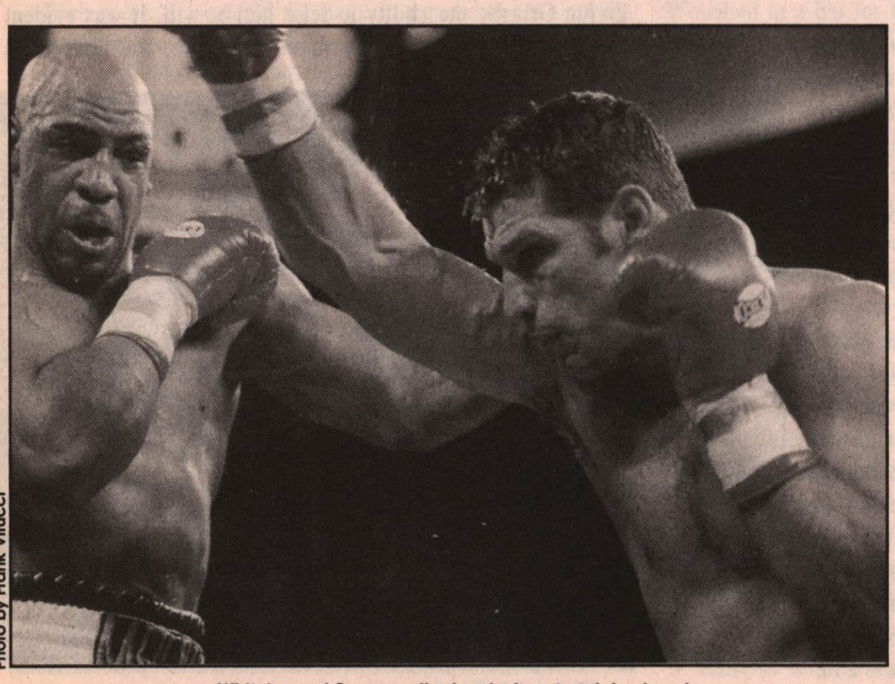


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Whitaker and Savarese fire bombs in entertaining brawl

David Reid

(Continued from page 21)

Among those outstanding rounds, the ninth stood out. It was also Reid's lone shot at scoring a knockout. Boudouani had been very careful to avoid his challenger's right, the same hand that had cut down Cuba's Alfredo Duvergel and brought Reid Olympic gold. So it caught the Frenchman by surprise when a left hook almost upended him.

The punched clipped Boudouani square on the chin, buckled his legs, and sent him into a lurching, weak-kneed retreat. Reid gave chase, and before the round ended, connected with 29 of the 32 power shots he threw, according to CompuBox. Boudouani was severely buffeted, but his boxing skills and tenacity allowed him to survive until his head cleared. Even so, it was such a dominant round, THE RING and Harold Lederman, HBO's unofficial official, gave Reid a two-point margin.

"When I hit him with that shot, I could hear the crowd roar," recalled Reid. "I could hear my family and everybody yelling, 'Get him, Dave. Get him.' It kinda pumped me up, and I tried to take him out, but he wasn't going for it. I knew I hurt him, but he had enough experience to keep away and stay up. So I had to go back to plan A."

Plan A almost came unraveled in the 11th, when Boudouani backed Reid into the ropes and unleashed a brief but on-target barrage of rights. Although it turned out that Reid was comfortably ahead on the judges' scorecards, he wasn't about to take any chances.

"I thought Boudouani won the 11th round, so I knew I needed the 12th round," Reid explained. "As soon as the bell rang, I took it to him."

For most of the final round, it was all Reid. He worked Boudouani over fairly convincingly, chasing him around the ring and banging home some good punches. But Reid tried so hard to finish big, he ran into a teeth-jarring left from the fading champion in the closing seconds. Reid, though, could taste the title by then, and wasn't about to cave on the homestretch.

The bout, sponsored by Bally's Park Place, was fast-paced and, for the most part, cleanly contested. Referee Randy Neumann didn't have much to concern himself with. The unanimous decision in Reid's favor, however, was surprisingly wide. Judge Fernando Viso (Venezula) had it 118-112, with Alejandro Rochin (Mexico) and John Steward (USA), scoring 117-112 and 117-111, respectively. THE RING had a narrow 114-113 edge for Reid, with his big ninth round and the strong finish being the difference.

Boudouani, whose disappointment was soothed by a $1-million payday, was gracious in defeat, saying that Reid will make a good champion and suggesting they do it again—only the next time in France. Before Boudouani left to have a gash over his left eye attended to, HBO Sports Senior Vice President Lou DiBella said he thought the ex-champ would make a great opponent for Vargas. Such a match would create an excellent measuring stick by which to evaluate Reid and Vargas against one another.

Right now, it's hard to pick between the two new 154-pound champions. True, Vargas' seventh-round TKO of Yory Boy Campas in December '98 was a more definitive victory than Reid's points win over Boudouanui. But in retrospect, it's clear that Boudouani presented a much more formidable obstacle. Although Reid vs. Vargas has all the earmarks of a future superfight, Philadelphia's latest world champion won't be fighting anybody for three or four months. He's going to have his left eyelid hitched up again, the third procedure he's had on the eye since the Olympics. While it will always be considered his Achille's heel, Team Reid continues to insist that the eye is not nearly as bad as it looks.

"It will be a target for the rest of David's career," conceded Dan Goossen, president of America Presents, Reid's promotional outfit. "But let's not forget that the eye was the worst it's been since we've had Dave, and he still did a tremendous job against a very worthy champion."

Yes, he did, especially for a fighter who brought a skimpy 11-0 (7) pro record into a fight against such a seasoned titleholder. But, of course, he's been doing stuff like that for a long time. Mitchell likes to tell the story about when Reid was 14, and easily bowling over all the other boys his age. The trainer was worried he wouldn't progress under such non-demanding circumstances, and decided to match him against kids 17 and 18 years old. The first time, Reid lost a close 3-2 decision, and was so upset, he threw the small loser's trophy up against the gym wall and broke it.

"He didn't come back to the gym for about a month," recalled Mitchell. "And when he did come back, I told him not to ever do that again. I put him in with another kid who was 18, and David lost another 3-2 decision. And when I gave him the trophy again, he threw it again, and broke that one, too. David was always a hard loser, and he's still the same way."

Reid's got a lot going for him that compensates for the damaged muscles in his left eyelid: speed, punching power, and a keen boxing mind. He's also got that indefinable something that defines Philadelphia fighters. Behind the boyish charm and affectionate disposition lurks an edge as hard as the North Philadelphia street where he grew up. With no father at home, Reid has been the man of his house since around the time he first went to the gym. It's all part of a package that, along with Mitchell's mentoring, has taken him farther than a lot of people thought possible. Don't be shocked if it takes him even farther. ■

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Lewis-Holyfield

(Continued from page 26)

Lewis) had the right guy winning.

There has been, and will continue to be, much scrutiny of the process used to select the judges. Who were these people? Who selected them? And why did they score it the way they did? Let's start with the middle question.

The judges were selected and paid ($5,150 each) by the three governing bodies, one each from the WBA (Christodoulou), IBF (Williams), and WBC (O'Connell). Going into the Lewis-Holyfield bout, Christodoulou had the most experience, having worked in 40 world title bouts. O'Connell was next with 22. Williams, a principle accounts clerk for the Atlantic City government, had worked only nine title bouts sanctioned by any of the three organization whose titles were on the line in the Lewis-Holyfield match.

Williams was the focus of much attention, not only because of her relative inexperience ("I've been in boxing 35 years, and I've never heard of Jean Williams," said Bob Arum), but because she scored the fifth round, 10-9, for Holyfield! That was the round when Lewis sent the off-balance WBA/IBF champ spinning and stumbling into the ropes with a right to the top of his head, precipitating a long, punishing barrage that was to prove the Englishman's best offensive surge. True, "The Real Deal" survived the shelling, and even managed a quick burst of his own. But win the round? No way. Lewis dominated.

"I have no qualms with someone disagreeing with me," Williams told the *Philadelphia Daily News*. "Everybody's entitled to their own opinion. But I know what I saw and I'm standing firm that I did the right thing. I have no regrets. Quite honestly, I don't understand the commotion. I made a judgment call. People are blowing this thing out of proportion."

British judge O'Connell apparently did a lot of tap-dancing once he returned to the British Isles. "Judged on the weight of opinion, I would say I was wrong," O'Connell was quoted as saying in the *New York Post*. "But I did what I thought was right at the time. I can't be any more honest than that." Later, O'Connell told *The Sun*, a British newspaper, that he'd been "misquoted about making mistakes." Whatever.

A few days after the fight, King took care to distance himself from the judges by issuing a press release that said he had "absolutely nothing to do with the selection of judges or the outcome of the fight."

Although Lewis gasped in disbelief at Jimmy Lennon's reading of the preposterous draw verdict and soon stormed out of the ring, by the time he got to the press conference, the evening's principal victim seemed surprisingly cheerful. Maybe it was the proper upbringing his mum had given him as a boy. Perhaps he was just putting his best face forward. Then again, possibly it was the satisfaction of knowing that he'd proven himself against the man widely considered the best heavyweight in the world. Whatever the reason, his inner feelings were hidden behind a pair of sunglasses and a smug grin.

"I thought I was in complete control the whole fight," said Lewis. "I got robbed. I can't believe the outcome. It was my time to shine, and they ripped me off. I failed to see when Evander hit me with a jab. I was pasting him with jabs all night."

It was left to Emanuel Steward, Lewis' trainer, to most eloquently express what was eating away at the guts of all true boxing fans.

"I'm more upset than anyone," sa Steward, his face a graven mask. "I ga Evander three rounds at the most. It look like Lennox was working with his sparri partners. But this sparring partner got $2 million. We never pay them that much no mally. It was not even a close figh Lennox controlled him with the jab, playe with him, and when Evander tried t mount an attack, he blocked it befor Evander could even start to punch. Th hurts boxing. There's got to be somethi there. People spent millions of dollars, mi lions. I really don't take it light. I think it disgusting."

So did a lot of other people. Goverr George Pataki asked the New York Sta Athletic Commission to investigate. Ne York State Attorney General Eliot Spitz launched his own investigation, and Ro M. Goodman, chairman of the New Yo Senate Committee on Investigations, sai his panel would also hold hearing Manhattan District Attorney Robe Morgenthau also got in on the act, sayin his office will conduct a grand jury invest gation. In the past, governmental attemp to clean up boxing have never been terribl successful. Whether this latest round o inquiries is just another game of politic football or will lead to meaningful chang remains to be seen.

It does seem that the outrage surroundin the Lewis-Holyfield decision might be th catalyst that sparks a groundswell of suppor for The Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Bil United States Senator John McCain, th bill's co-sponsor, was ringside for the figh and has again asked for bipartisan support fo congressional passage.

"The athletes whose dedication an physical sacrifice sustain this sport deserv better, as do the millions of boxing fans i New York and across America who sup port them," wrote McCain in a letter o support to Spitzer.

HOW THEY SCORED IT

Below are the round-by-round scorecards of the three official judges, followed by THE RING's tally:

Judges	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7	Round 8	Round 9	Round 10	Round 11	Round 12	Total
Larry O'Connell	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-10E	10-9H	10-9H	10-10E	10-9H	10-9L	115-115 Even
Stanley Christodoulou	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-9L	10-9L	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-9H	10-9H	10-10E	10-9L	116-113 Lewis
Eugenia Williams	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-9H	10-9H	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-9H	10-9H	10-9H	10-9L	115-113 Holyfield
THE RING	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-9H	10-9L	10-9L	10-9L	10-9L	10-9L	10-9H	10-10E	10-9L	117-112 Lewis

Ali himself said that the decision "will surely go down in boxing annals as the biggest fix in fight history."

Tough new legal guidelines would be a good start. If the sport is too unprincipled to police itself, it obviously needs to be kept on a tighter leash. Boxing will always be the hardest game on both sides of the ropes, but minimum standards must be maintained. What went down at the Garden is enough to make you forget all about the demise of 15-round title fights and the illogical WBC accidental cut rule. They're minor concerns compared to questions of fairness and honesty.

It was especially lamentable that the sport soiled its own nest on the night that big time boxing returned to MSG with a sellout crowd and a substantial pay-per-view audience looking on. So many good intentions; so many dashed hopes. The Brits, between 5,000 and 7,000 strong, rocked the Garden with soccer songs and chants of "Looo-is." But there was no soccer-style bad behavior, even when the final twist of the blade came from the hand of a fellow Englishman.

Regardless of the result of any investigations, the rematch seems pretty much inevitable. The only question is when. Holyfield, the left side of his face swollen, blood leaking from an abrasion on his forehead, seemed to think he could do better next time.

"When a man is able to prove himself by what he did, what do you do? Give him a hand clap and tell him he did well," said Holyfield when asked what he thought of Lewis' performance. "He has done well. I'd have to rank him with Riddick Bowe, because Riddick Bowe is the only other guy who was able to do what he did. But [Lewis] ain't lost his opportunity to be undisputed champion. I ain't lost my opportunity to be the undisputed champion. We can just fight again. I had problems tonight. Next time, I won't have problems."

Ah, yes, the ever-popular next time. Lewis-Holyfield II. It will, of course, be brought to you by the same folks who brought you Lewis-Holyfield I, and be available on PPV for around 50 bucks for those so inclined. More than a million households paid to see the first fight, but maybe the next time the backlash will truly hit, and people will keep their money in their pockets.

Boxing had a good thing going for it with the heavyweight unification, and was getting some pretty decent pub from the mainstream media. That was before the stink bomb went off at the Garden. And it wasn't just the Lewis-Holyfield fight that was sacrificed, a lot of the positive vibe built up by the Oscar De La Hoya-Ike Quartey and Felix Trinidad-Pernell Whitaker fights was overpowered. What should have been a banner night for boxing turned out to be a disaster. Reasonable men have argued that the fight was indeed close, but that's light years short of the point. The most crucial fact is that the overwhelming majority of people are convinced that Lewis was bamboozled. Whether they are correct in this assumption or not, the perception is there nonetheless. Lewis may get the revenge he deserves in a rematch, but the larger question is how many people will care. And that is something even Don King has to worry about. ■

Emile Griffith

(Continued from page 55)

ing," reflected Griffith. "My father died when I was on the way to becoming world champion. My mother became the rock of the family. Four brothers, four sisters, we were all pretty close-knit. So her death had a massive impact, on me especially.

"Every time I went to fight, to train, she was there. My mother lived with me, and in later years we remained close. Maybe in a sort of way I became even more dependent on her than I was before. But she didn't suffer, which is a mercy, and maybe we have to be thankful for that."

We should be thankful, too, for the rare purity of will and sublime skill that Griffith brought to his profession. A profession that is elevated from the crude, cruel, and questionable only by its unique capacity among sports to offer such blatant manifestation of human suffering, aspiration, and, ultimately, triumph. At age 30, having just regained the world middleweight title from Italian Nino Benvenuti, Griffith had won five world titles and lost only

(Continued on page 78)

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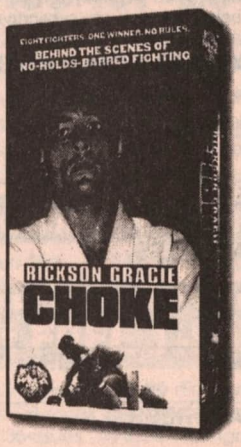

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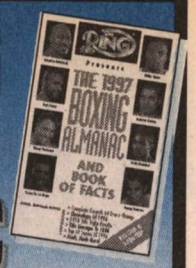

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Emile Griffith

(Continued from page 77)

eight times, most of these defeats the result of larceny. At 35, he was warring with Carlos Monzon in Monte Carlo for the world middleweight crown. And at 38, only the eccentric scoring of three judges prevented him from claiming the WBC super welterweight title from German Eckhard Dagge.

It was fellow middleweight legend Monzon who perhaps said it all after escaping from the Monaco principality on that June night in 1973 with a decision many felt should have gone the other way. "You no old man," Monzon said in broken English. Emile Griffith, no matter how much he drinks, how miserably he looks after himself, how depressed on his bad days he becomes, can never grow old. As he left the arena, together with LaPorte, Tsiomos, and a reminiscing Albert regaling them with masterfully crafted stories of their shared past, he was sober and he was happy. ■

Brian Doogan is THE RING's European correspondent and a regular contributor to this magazine.

Phil Zwick

(Continued from page 59)

"Did I not stiffen Gomez, did I not knock out Rhoten, the state featherweight champion, and did I not hold Scalzo to a 15-round draw?" he argued. "And for your information, I licked some of the ranking lightweights of the world. I also whipped more foreign champions than any champion of the world did. My clipping book will prove this to be a fact, and I didn't get my record stumbling along the bar at the Elk's club.

"I've made a living at boxing since I was a grade school boy, and note, no bumps on my head. I truly believe that the only time Mr. Buchanan and a few more on the commission ever saw a boxing contest was when they became a member of the commission and came on a free pass, and if they had to pass an examination on the rules and regulations, such as the Marquis of Queensbury rules which govern boxing the world over, the commissioners wouldn't be in the seat long enough to warm it up."

In the face of his fusillade, a compromis was hastily forged. If Zwick beat ranke contender Charles Cabey Lewis, who' given Pep a tough fight a month earlier, the a Pep-Zwick match could follow. Zwic agreed, but only after getting a promise fro the champion's manager, Lou Viscusi, that title fight would be arranged after he bea Lewis. If he was badly beaten himself Zwick said he would retire.

Hundreds of Kaukaunu residents rode "Zwick Special" train to Milwaukee fo the fight on July 15, 1948, and drowne out the rest of the ring announcer's intro duction with cheers when he turne toward Zwick and said, "And in this co ner, from Kaukauna ... " Unfortunately they got nothing else to cheer about, a Lewis knocked their hero out in 2:55 o the first round. Not surprisingly, Zwic immediately reneged on his promise t retire.

"It is I who has to strive to survive an make a living for my family in thi world," he said. "So maybe the old adage 'Every man to his trade,' is true. Boxing i surely my trade. I have been at it since m school days, and I don't carry many, i any, marks of the game."

"True, Phil is one of the few fighter with 225 fights behind him that isn't tip ping his hat to telephone poles," wrote a columnist friend of the boxer. "We'd like to see him stay that way and enjoy hi remaining years with all faculties intact."

Nevertheless, Zwick campaigned on hitting the road in 1951. He traveled around the U.S., fighting and hunting before finally settling in Vallejo California, and becoming a police officer.

In 1961, Zwick was struck by a myste rious ailment that left him mostly para lyzed. He claimed it had nothing to do with boxing, but happened when a boar fell on him as he was doing carpentry work. When word of his condition reached Kaukaunu, canisters were placed all over town, and the townsfolk chipped in to help one of the city's two most famous exports. The other was a popular cheese spread developed there in the 1930s, called Kaukaunu Klub. So naturally, Zwick became "The Kaukaunu Klubber."

When he died on July 8, 1963, the Wisconsin legislature passed a resolution lauding Zwick's exploits, both here and abroad. That was nice, but the object of

such acclaim would have probably preferred an official waiver of the rule against allowing dead persons in the ring. He's no doubt still ready, after all the spinning in his grave Zwick must have done since George Foreman's comeback. ■

Pete Ehrmann, a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, is a regular contributor to this magazine.

New Faces

(Continued from page 60)

eration," said Joe Goossen, Whitaker's trainer, manager, and sometimes surrogate father. "We came away with a split-decision [loss] in that guy's backyard, but what we won that night was that HBO was extremely impressed with the performance of Mount. A lot of people thought he was going to fold, and he proved otherwise. Mount had the other guy in trouble.

"This is going to be a real springboard for Lance to turn into a world-class fighter. He won his share of rounds, and I think he found out a lot about himself and realized he can do things a little sooner. I'm willing to put him in with anyone now, he has so much confidence. I think the Savarese fight really invigorated him. Sometimes it takes a loss to make you realize how good or bad you are. Lance realizes he could have done a lot better."

Judge Alan Rubenstein had Savarese winning 97-93, while judge Al DeVito scored it 95-94 for Whitaker. Judge Paul Venti had the deciding score, giving Savarese a 95-93 edge, yet he gave Whitaker a 10-7 round in the sixth, after awarding four of the first five rounds to Savarese.

Goossen wanted Whitaker to take the fight to Savarese, but when the veteran came out fast, Whitaker cowered. He appeared disinterested in the early going. His strategy was baffling: Was he waiting to wear down Savarese, who went 12 rounds with George Foreman in '97, or was he going to suddenly jump Savarese and catch him by surprise? Whitaker showed no signs of life until the sixth, when he was spurred on by a cut above his left eye, which would eventually require 26 stitches to close. Whitaker became desperate. Fearful that the fight might be stopped, he went after Savarese for the first time.

"I think being afraid the fight might be stopped really motivated Lance," Goossen said. "I think George Foreman said it best on the HBO telecast when he said, 'When you're a big man, you have to act like a big man.' Lance could have won that fight very easily. I personally think it was a one-point fight either way, but he absolutely could have come out faster than he did."

Whitaker knows now that he has to start throwing punches sooner, rather than spinning on his heels for five rounds and waiting for his opponent to open a gaping cut over his left eye. Whitaker entered the bout in probably the best shape of his life. His muscles were much more defined than in the past because he was running more and training harder. Goossen also had him hitting every type of punching bag imaginable.

"I felt pretty good," Whitaker said. "I never trained like this before for a fight. I watched what I was eating. When I fight, I want to look good. I learned against Savarese that I have to let my hands go a little bit and pace myself better. I don't know what flicked the switch in that fight. I thought they were going to stop the fight, that's what I was afraid of. I wanted to stop this guy, bad. I wanted to put it all on the line. I know what I can do now. Just growing up my whole life, I was never really confident with myself, that's been a problem of mine."

Whitaker spent a portion of his teenage years in an adolescent home, until he turned 18 and left.

"I pretty much had no ambition; I never knew where I would be the next day when I was 14, 15 years old," Whitaker said. "I had no choices. I learned responsibility in that place. It was very difficult growing up in the home. I had to ask to go outside. You go to school and come straight home. At that time, I hated it. They wanted to know where I was at all times, it was tough."

Back then, he was viewed as an overgrown pacifist, and an easy mark for other kids to prod into fights.

"I used to run home almost every day when I was in elementary school," Whitaker recalled. "I was this huge, six-foot tall kid, and older kids would come down from high school to challenge me because I was so much bigger than everybody else. I knew what would happen if I did fight—some little kid would get hurt, and I didn't want any part of that."

Whitaker still gets tested, but he does not run anymore. And he's not afraid to hurt anyone either. Just ask Lou Savarese. ■

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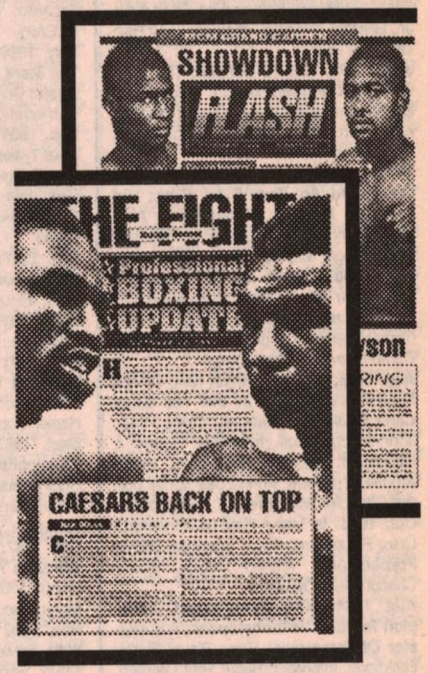

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July 1986: Tyson, McGuigan, Hagler: The Stars Catch Fire And Boxing Is Hot Again! Color Pinup: Azumah Nelson. Also: Camacho-Chavez.

Dec. 1986: Larry Holmes' Message To Mike Tyson: "Show Me You Can Kick My Butt!" Color pinup: Mark Breland. Interview: Holmes. Plus: Witherspoon-Bruno, Evander Holyfield, Cruz-McGuigan, Danny Lopez.

Feb. 1987: Upset Of The Decade: Has Honeyghan Cut Short The Curry Era? Color Pinup: Marvin Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Edwin Rosario, Hector Camacho.

May 1987: Hagler vs. Leonard: Who Will Win And Why. Color Pinup: Edwin Rosario. Also: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Leonard-Hagler, Bobby Czyz, Greg Haugen.

Sept. 1987: Bobby Czyz: Finally, His Accomplishments Match His Appeal. Color Pinup: Sugar Ray. Interview: Lloyd Honeyghan. Also: Mark Breland, Hector Camacho, Weekend Warriors.

Oct. 1987: Greatness Beckons: When Will Mike Tyson Answer The Call? Color Pinup: Michael Olajide. Interview: Tyrell Biggs. Also: Paz-Haugen, Marvin Hagler.

Nov. 1987: Michael Spinks: The War With Tyson Is Okay With Him. Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: Frankie Duarte. Also: Matthew Hilton, Hagler-Czyz.

Dec. 1987: Mike Tyson: Undisputed Heavyweight King-But Is He Losing His Loyal Subjects? Color Pinup: Matthew Hilton. Interview: Barry McGuigan. Also: Aaron Pryor, Mike McCallum.

Jan. 1988: The Collapse Of A Hero: Why Breland Never Hit The Mark Of Greatness. Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Michael Nunn, Alexis Arguello, lightweights.

Feb. 1988: Pazienza & Haugen Go For Each Other's Throats. Color Pinup: Marlon Starling. Interview: Bob Arum. Also: Tate-Olajide, ESPN Boxing.

May 1988: KO Exclusive-Mike Tyson, As Only Mike Tyson Knows Him. Color Pinup: Mike McCallum. Interview: Thomas Hearns. Also: Tyson-Spinks Poll, Michael Dokes, Virgil Hill.

July 1988: Superfight History Dictates: Don't Expect The Expected From Tyson-Spinks. Color Pinup: Roger Mayweather. Interview: Dr. Ferdie Pacheco. Also: Roberto Duran, Azumah Nelson, Barkley-Olajide.

Aug. 1988: Tyson-Spinks: KO's Fearless Forecast Of Superfight '88. Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Matthew Hilton. Also: Lockridge-Knight, Evander Holyfield, Lloyd Honeyghan.

Sept. 1988: Tyson-Spinks, The Aftermath—What If Tyson Wins; What If Spinks Wins? Color Pinup: Frank Tate. Interview: Marlon Starling. Also: Barry McGuigan, Simon Brown, risk-taking.

Oct. 1988: Middleweight Terrorism: Iran Bombs The Hit Man. Color Pinup: Don Lalonde. Interview: Frank Bruno. Also: Roger Mayweather, Marvin Hagler.

Jan. 1989: The Troubled Times Of Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Lloyd Honeyghan. Interview: Gil Clancy. Also: Meldrick Taylor, Jeff Fenech, Boxing's Champs.

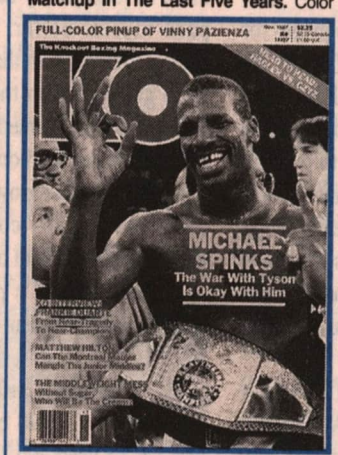
Feb. 1989: George Foreman Is Born Again. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Bill Cayton. Also: The Olympics, Davey Hilton, John Mugabi, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1989: "I Beat Up Tyson Before, I'll Do It Again," by Carl Williams. Color Pinup: Michael Nunn. Also: Chavez-Mayweather, Brian Mitchell, Marv Albert.

Nov. 1989: The Real Duran; The Stories Behind The Legend. Color Pinup: Orlando Canizales. Interview: Mike Trainer. Also: Edwin Rosario, Rosi-Van Horn.

Feb. 1990: George Foreman Risks A Multimillion-Dollar Shot At Tyson. Color Pinup: Brian Mitchell. Interview: Riddick Bowe. Also: Simon Brown, Molina-Lopez, East vs. West.

May 1990: Chavez vs. Taylor: The Best Matchup In The Last Five Years. Color



Pinup: Daniel Zaragoza. Interview: Pernell Whitaker. Also: Leonard-Hearns, Glenn McCrory, Prince Charles Williams.

June 1990: A Sugar-Free Future? Thomas Hearns Is Looking Up. Color Pinup: Glenn McCrory. Interview: Michael Moorer. Also: Matthew Hilton, Molina-Suarez, Foreman-Cooney, Camacho-Paz.

July 1990: KO Interview-Sugar Ray Leonard. Color Pinup: Jorge Paez. Also: Michael Nunn, Buster Douglas, Jibaro Perez, the Olympians.

Aug. 1990: Meldrick Taylor: Brilliance In Defeat. Color Pinup: Buster Douglas. Interview: Teddy Atlas. Also: Buddy McGirt, Dokes-Ruddock, Simon Brown.

Sept. 1990: KO Interview-Buster Douglas. Color Pinup: Macho Camacho. Also: Thomas Hearns, Nigel Benn, Greg Haugen, Boxing Hall of Fame.

Oct. 1990: Send In The Clown: Is Jorge Paez A Phenom Or A Fraud? Color Pinup: Paul Banke. Interview: Tony Lopez. Also: Chavez-Taylor II, Jesse Benavides.

Nov. 1990: The Comeback Of Mike Tyson: A Crooked Course Straight To The Top. Color Pinup: Tony Lopez. Interview: Don Dunphy. Also: Davis-Breland, Riddick Bowe, federal commission.

Dec. 1990: The Heart Of The Matter: Who Will Survive The Holyfield-Douglas War? Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Virgil Hill. Also: Michael Carbajal, Ruelas Brothers, Best Fighter Poll.

Jan. 1991: Macho Ado About Nothing? Why Hector Camacho Wants To Be Believed. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Irving Rudd. Also: Sugar Ray Leonard, Orlando Canizales, Vinny Pazienza.

Feb. 1991: 10 Fighters To Fear: Boxing's Most Destructive Hitters. Color Pinup: Razor Ruddock. Interview: Ray Mercer. Also: Roberto Duran, Saoul Mamby, Mike Lane, Sugar Ray Robinson.

May 1991: Ruddock Eyes The Big Upset Of Tyson. Color Pinup: Luisito Espinoza. Interview: Jeff Fenech. Also: Virgil Hill, Pernell Whitaker, Alex Ramos, Simon Brown, Buddy McGirt.

June 1991: Exclusive KO Interview-Evander Holyfield. Color Pinup: Rafael Perez. Also: Norris-Leonard, Charles Williams, champs of 1971 vs. 1991, Chavez.

July 1991: Riddick Bowe: Is He Destined To Be Heavyweight Champ? Color Pinup: Michael Carbajal. Interview: Buddy McGirt. Also: Bobby Czyz, Buster Douglas, Mark Breland.

Aug. 1991: Desert Storm II: Will The Tyson-Ruddock Rematch Be Different? Color Pinup: Loreto Garza. Interview: Michael Carbajal. Also: Brown-Blocker, Fenech-Nelson preview, Harold Brazier, Yuh-Carbajal.

Sept. 1991: Remember Me? I Won The Fight! What "The Real Deal" Still Has To Deal With. Color Pinup: Ray Mercer. Interview: Eddie Futch. Also: Larry Holmes, southpaw heavyweights, Toney-Nunn, Brown-Taylor.

Oct. 1991: Thomas Hearns Won Another Miracle! Now There Are Mo Hills Left To Climb. Color Pinup: Roberto Gonzalez. Interview: Mike McCallum. Also: Norris-Curry, Richard Steele, Tommy Dorsey.

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson-The Only Heavyweight That Matters. Color Pinup: Thomas Hearns. Interview: Troy Dorsey. Also: Fenech-Nelson, James Toney, lost art of bodypunching.

Dec. 1991: Tyson vs. Holyfield-The Experts Analyze The Elements That Will Decide The Fight. Color Pinup: Julio Gamache. Also: Michael Moorer, Pernell Whitaker, Greg Richardson, Ricky Quiroga.

Jan. 1992: The Tyson-Holyfield Showdown: An Exclusive Forecast By George Foreman. Color Pinup: Myung Woo Yuh. Also: Fenech-Nelson, TV announcers, boxing's toughest men, Tony

March 1992: KO Interview Mike Tyson-An In-Depth, Toe-To-Toe Talk With Boxing's Biggest Star. Color Pinup: Michael Moorer. Also: Thomas Hearns, Tracy Patterson, Larry Holmes, best fighter poll

May 1992: Division-By-Division Face-offs: The Best Of '92 vs. The Best Of '
Color Pinup: James Warring. Interview: Hector Camacho. Also: Tommy Morrison, Bert Cooper, Gianfranco Rosi.

June 1992: If Not Tyson Or Holyfield Then Who? Bowe? Moorer? Ruddock? Lewis? Mercer? Color Pinup: James Toney. Interview: Shelly Finkel. Also: Scott Olson, overrated and underrated fighters, Orlin Norris, Whitaker-Pineda.

July 1992: The Title Reign of Evander Holyfield: A Reason To Hide ... Or A Reason For Pride? Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Julian Jackson.

Kelley-Dorsey, Nelson-Fenech, Kennedy McKinney.

Aug. 1992: Bowe Knows The Big Fight: The Top Contender Analyzes Holmes-Holyfield. Color Pinup: Julian Jackson. Interview: Michael Spinks. Also: Thomas Hearns, Blue Horizon, fighting fear, Toney-Barkley, Greg Haugen.

Sept. 1992: Can Tommy Morrison Punch Out The Theory ... White Men Can't Fight. Color Pinup: Welcome Ncita. Interview: Ken Norton. Also: Reggie Johnson, Jimmy Paul, McGirt-Blocker, Ali-Shavers.

Oct. 1992: The Olympics: Golden Memories ... And Golden Futures? Color Pinup: Reggie Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Genaro Hernandez, Terry Norris.

Nov. 1992: Foreman vs. Holmes: The Fight Evander Holyfield Should Have Prevented. Color Pinup: Iran Barkley. Interview: Joey Gamache. Also: Hector Camacho, Tracy Patterson, Rudy Zavala.

Dec. 1992: The Final Four: Ruddock vs. Lewis, Holyfield vs. Bowe. Color Pinup: Genaro Hernandez. Interview: Lennox Lewis. Also: Whitaker-Pineda, Bowe-Coetzer, Alex Stewart, Gamache-Lopez.

Jan. 1993: Holyfield vs. Bowe: Who Will Win and Why. Color Pinup: Al Cole. Interview: Vinny Pazienza. Also: James Toney, Terrence Alli, Maurice Blocker.

March 1993: Not Just Another English Muffin: Lennox Lewis Powers His Way Toward The Title. Color Pinup: Leeonzer Barber. Interview: Emanuel Steward. Also: Reggie Johnson, Lopez-Gamache, USA Network.

May 1993: Recapping The Future: Julio Cesar Chavez' Road To 100-0. Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Junior Jones. Also: Buddy McGirt, Riddick Bowe, Raul Marquez.

Dec. 1993: The KO Feud Rages On: "I Will Torture You!" Says Riddick Bowe To Lennox Lewis. Color Pinup: Kennedy McKinney. Also: Mississippi boxing, George Foreman, Yori Boy Campas , Carbajal-Kim, Morrison-Moorer.

Jan. 1994: Outrage At The Alamodome: "Sweet Pea" Shafted! Color Pinup: Orlando Canizales. Interview: Kennedy McKinney. Also: James Toney, book of lists, M.A. Barrera.

March 1994: Holyfield-Bowe II: Why It Was Different This Time. Color Pinup: Felix Trinidad. Also: Morrison-Bentt, Thomas Hearns, Don King, Michael Carbajal, Oscar De La Hoya.

June 1994: Frankie Randall Makes It Official! J.C. Chavez Is A Beaten Man. Color Pinup: Jose Luis Bueno. Also: Norris brothers, Felix Trinidad, Holyfield-Moorer preview, heroes to the stars.

July 1994: The Upset Epidemic! Carbajal's Conqueror: Chiquita Gonzalez. Color Pinup: Junior Jones. Interview: Rafael Ruelas. Also: Jake Rodriguez, Czyz-Hearns preview, Randall-Chavez II preview.

June 1995: The Tug-Of-War Over Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Wilfredo Vasquez. Interview: Oliver McCall. Plus: Alejandro Gonzalez, Alexis Arguello, Kostya Tszyu.

March 1996: Whether He Fights Or Not ... Tyson Is Hot! Hot!! Hot!!! Color Pinup: Marco Antonio Barrera. Interview: Jose Sulaiman. Plus: Reggie Tuur, heavyweight prospects, champion's edge.

June 1996: Destined For The Hall Of Fame: Who's In, Who's Out. Color Pinup: Wayne McCullough. Interview: Cedric Kushner. Plus: Danny Romero, Mark Breland, Dynamite Dozen—the next 12.

July 1996: Awesome Again! Tyson Destroys Bruno. Color Pinup: Tyson-Bruno. Interview: Christy Martin. Plus: Chavez-De La Hoya preview, Derrick Gainer, '96 Hall of Fame inductees.

Aug. 1996 (Special 88-Page Edition): An Inside Look At Team Tyson—*KO* Talks With Trainer Jay Bright. Color Pinup: Naseem Hamed. Interview: Jay Bright. Plus: 1946 vs. 1996, William Guthrie, middleweights, young heavyweights.

Sept. 1996: Tyson vs. Seldon. Don't Bet On This Fight Until You've Read This Story! Color Pinup: Arturo Gatti. Interview: Butterbean. Plus: Dana Rosenblatt, '92 Olympians, McGuigan-Pedroza.

Nov. 1996 (Special 88-Page Edition): The *KO* 100. Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Bob Arum. Plus: Roy Jones, Roberto Duran, Joe Cortez.

Dec. 1996: Andrew Golota—Taking The Low Road to Stardom. Color Pinup: Mark Johnson. Interview: Rock Newman. Plus: De La Hoya-Gonzalez, Chuck Bodak, bizarre endings, Chavez-Rosario.

Winter 1996: This Is War! Holyfield-Tyson Will Be Explosive ... And Short. Color Pinup: Roy Jones. Interview: Bernard Hopkins. Plus: Riddick Bowe, David Reid, Holyfield-Qawi.

Jan. 1997 (Special 88-Page Edition): Bowe-Golota II: Hatred And Vengeance ... It's A Beautiful Thing! Color Pinup: Johnny Tapia. Interview: Lou Duva. Plus: Mouse Strauss, heavyweight rematches, Azumah Nelson.

Feb. 1997: KO's 1997 Wish List. Color Pinup: Ike Quartey. Interview: Naseem Hamed. Plus: David Tua, Felix Trinidad, Adolpho Washington, Bobby Czyz.

March 1997: Holyfield's Trainer Tells All! An Inside Look At The Upset Of The Year. Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Plus: George Foreman, Lupe Pintor, boxing bill, Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Aug. 1997: Oscar Reaches ... But Can't Grasp The Stars. Color Pinup: Nate Miller. Interview: Hector Camacho. Plus: Norris-Trinidad preview, Hall of Fame, Angel Manfredy.

Sept. 1997: A Legitimate Grudge Match! Why Romero-Tapia Could Be The Fight Of The Year. Color Pinup: Oscar De La Hoya. Interview: David Tua. Plus: Ike Quartey, George Foreman, top promoters.

Nov. 1997: Filling In The Missing Pieces: What "The Bite" Means To Boxing. Color Pinup: Christy Martin. Interview: Jim Lampley. Plus: Vince Phillips, British prospects, Iran Barkley.

Dec. 1997: Johnny Tapia Outshines Danny Romero: The Defining Moment In A "Crazy Life." Color Pinup: Genaro Hernandez. Interview: Frans Botha. Plus: Lewis-Akiwande, Don King, Charles Brewer.

Holiday 1997 (Special 88-Page Edition): Holyfield-Moorer II: Can Evander Avenge His Ugliest Defeat? Color Pinup: Vince Phillips. Interview: Mills Lane. Plus: Roy Jones, Baby Jake Matlala, Boxing 2000.

Jan. 1998: De La Hoya Humbles The Macho Man: "Oscar's The Best I've Ever Fought." Color Pinup: William Guthrie. Interview: Mark Johnson. Plus: Johnny Tapia, Pinklon Thomas, defense.

Feb. 1998: Is Lennox Lewis The World's Best Heavyweight? Color Pinup: Charles Brewer. Interview: Marc Ratner. Plus: Otis Grant, Arturo Gatti.

March 1998: Evander Holyfield: For The Real Deal, Lewis Is No Big Deal. Color Pinup: Lou Del Valle. Interview: Lennox Lewis. Plus: David Izon, Meldrick Taylor, rapid weight loss.

May 1998: Living Up To The Hype: Sometimes They Do ... Sometimes They Don't. Color Pinup: David Reid. Interview: Best Of ... (Part III). Plus: Naseem Hamed, Marty Denkin, women's boxing.

June 1998: Lewis vs. Holyfield: Why The Fight Of The Year Isn't Going To Happen. Color Pinup: Evander Holyfield. Interview: Eddie Futch. Plus: Hector Lizarraga, pain, Head-To-Head review.

Aug. 1998: Lewis Bombs Out Briggs: Would The WBC Champ Do This To Holyfield? Color Pinup: Keith Mullings. Interview: Shane Mosley. Plus: Pernell Whitaker, Marco Antonio Barrera, Roberto Garcia.

Sept. 1998: Can Mike Tyson Make A Successful Comeback? Sugar Ray Leonard Has The Answer. Color Pinup: Michael Grant. Interview: Brad Jacobs. Plus: Naseem Hamed, Wayne McCullough, Kirk Johnson.

Oct. 1998: The Ultimate Fantasy Card. Color Pinup: Oscar De La Hoya. Interview: Roy Jones. Plus: Brendan Ingle, NYPD boxing, prospect blueprint.

Nov. 1998 The *KO* 100. Color Pinup: Reggie Johnson. Interview: Tim Austin. Plus: Cesar Bazan, Spencer Oliver, Bobby Czyz.

Dec. 1998: Winning Fights Is Easier Than Winning Fans: Why Can't We Appreciate Roy Jones? Color Pinup: Tim Austin. Interview: Michael Grant. Plus: Christy Martin, Ali Reform Act, one-hit wonders.

Holiday 1998: Toe-To-Toe With The Top 10: Where Does Tyson Fit In? Color Pinup: Shane Mosley. Inteview: Larry Hazzard. Plus: Evander Holyfield, junior middleweights.

Jan. 1999 (Special 88-Page Edition): Oscar Eliminates Chazez ... Now The Real Fights Begin! Color Pinup: Yory Boy Campas. Interview: William Joppy. Plus: Mark Johnson, U.S.A. vs. the world.

Feb. 1999: Holyfield & Lewis: Did They Hurt Themselves Before They Could Hurt Each Other? Color Pinup: Andrew Golota. Interview: Angel Manfredy. Plus: Mismatches, Bobby Czyz on watching fights.

March 1999: Exposed! Is Hamed Really Hector Camacho In Disguise? Color Pinup: Mike Tyson. Interview: Joe Frazier. Plus: Zab Judah, Vuyani Bungu, Frankie Randall.

May 1999: The Tyson Of Old ... Or Just An Old Tyson? Color Pinup: Luisito Espinosa. Interview: Fernando Vargas. Plus: Antonio Diaz, Sumya Anani, standing eight-count.

June 1999 (Special 88-Page Edition): De La Hoya vs. Trinidad: The Fight The Public Demands ... But Is It Going To Happen? Color Pinup: David Tua. Interview: Tommy Brooks. Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Tony Marshall, best of the century.

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☐ JUN/83	☐ FEB/88	☐ MAY/91	☐ JAN/94	☐ JAN/98
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☐ JAN/85	☐ OCT/88	☐ OCT/91	☐ MAR/96	☐ AUG/98
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WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were compiled as of January 1999, the WBC as of March 1999, and the IBF as of January 1999.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	–
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	C
John Ruiz (USA)	1	2	3
Zeljko Mavrovic (CROA)	2	10	–
Vitali Klitchko (UKR)	3	9	–
David Tua (NZ)	4	–	1
Michael Grant (USA)	5	6	–
Larry Donald (USA)	6	3	4
Andrew Golota (POL)	7	12	–
Shannon Briggs (USA)	8	–	–
Axel Schulz (GER)	9	–	–
Oliver McCall (USA)	10	–	–
Henry Akinwande (GB)	16	1	6
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	4	11
Oleg Maskaev (UKR)	29	5	–
Jade Scott (USA)	15	7	–
Mike Tyson (USA)	–	8	–
Francois Botha (SA)	22	–	2
Hasim Rahman (USA)	11	–	5
Vaughn Bean (USA)	–	–	7
Ray Mercer (USA)	–	–	8
Chris Byrd (USA)	17	–	9
Robert Hawkins (USA)	–	–	10

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	C	–	–
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	–	C	–
Arthur Williams (USA)	–	–	C
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	1	–	9
Dale Brown (CAN)	2	11	–
Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)	3	8	7
Ramon Garbey (CUB)	4	–	6
Bruce Scott (GB)	5	–	–
Saul Montana (MEX)	6	1	1
Stefan Anghern (SWI)	7	–	–
Terry Dunstan (GB)	8	–	8
Alexei Ilin (RUS)	9	–	–
Andre Purlette (GUY)	10	–	10
Robert Daniels (USA)	15	2	–
Ken Murphy (USA)	21	3	4
Nate Miller (USA)	–	4	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	16	5	–
Stefan Anghern (SWI)	–	6	–
Valery Vikhor (LAT)	–	7	–
Ezequiel Paixao (BRA)	–	9	–
Bruce Scott (GB)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Stefan Anghem (SWI)	–	–	3
Imamu Mayfield (USA)	23	12	5

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	C	–
Reggie Johnson (USA)	–	–	C
Derrick Harmon (USA)	1	7	9
Montell Griffin (USA)	2	–	–
Crawford Ashley (GB)	3	6	2
David Telesco (USA)	4	4	5
Michael Nunn (USA)	5	–	–
Hisashi Teraji (JAP)	6	–	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	7	3	4
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	8	12	8
Eric Harding (USA)	9	5	–
Yawe Davis (ITA)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	1
Dario Matteoni (ARG)	–	2	–
Lincoln Carter (USA)	–	8	10
Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)	15	9	11
Anthony Bigeni (AUS)	–	10	–
Will Taylor (USA)	–	–	3
Antonio Tarver (USA)	13	–	6
Mark Prince (GB)	–	–	7

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Richie Woodhall (GB)	C	–	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	C	–
Sven Ottke (GER)	–	–	C
Glenn Catley (GB)	1	–	–
Eric Lucas (CAN)	2	5	–
Thomas Tate (USA)	3	3	1
Dean Francis (GB)	4	–	–
David Starie (GB)	5	7	8
Tarick Salmaci (LEB)	6	–	–
Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)	7	9	3
Bruno Girard (FRA)	8	2	–
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	9	12	9
Mario Velt (GER)	10	–	–
Byron Mitchell (USA)	12	1	4
Jorge Castro (ARG)	–	4	–
Mads Larsen (DEN)	16	6	–
Paul Smallman (AUS)	–	8	–
Manuel Siacca (PR)	–	10	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	–	–	2
Rick Thornberry (AUST)	25	–	5
Antoine Byrd (USA)	–	–	6
Giovanni Nardiello (ITA)	–	–	7
Dean Francis (GB)	–	–	10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Robert McCracken (GB)	1	7	3
Antwun Echols (USA)	2	–	–
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	3	–	–
Keith Holmes (USA)	4	4	6
Kevin Palmer (USA)	5	–	–
Giovanni Pretorius (SA)	6	8	4
Erland Betare (FRA)	7	–	–
Davide Ciarlante (ITA)	8	–	–
Davey Hilton (CAN)	9	12	–
Alex Zaitzev (RUS)	10	–	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	1	–
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	2	7
Rito Ruvalcaba (MEX)	–	3	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	5	–
Winky Wright (USA)	12	6	–
Agostino Cardamone (ITA)	19	9	–
Ramon Moyano (ARG)	24	10	–
Robert Allen (USA)	18	–	1
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	–	2
Anthony Andrews (GUY)	–	–	5
Brian Barbosa (USA)	17	–	8
Peter Venancio (BRA)	–	–	9
Lansana Djallo (JUI)	–	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Francisco Castillejo (SPA)	C	–	–
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	5	C	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	–	–	C
Tony Marshall (USA)	1	7	–
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	2	3	–
Keith Mullings (USA)	3	–	–
Kevin Kelly (USA)	4	1	–
Kookyui Song (KOR)	6	–	–
James Coker (USA)	7	–	–
Rodney Jones (USA)	8	10	–
Anthony Jones (USA)	9	–	–
Quirino Garcia (MEX)	10	–	–
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	–	2	–
Emmett Linton (USA)	–	4	9
Pedro Ortega (MEX)	–	5	–
Jose Luis Lopez (MEX)	–	6	–
Raul Frank (GUY)	27	8	–
David Reid (USA)	–	9	7
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Earnie Artango (AUSTRL)	26	–	3
Raul Marquez (USA)	13	–	4
Carl Daniels (USA)	–	–	5
Yory Boy Campas (MEX)	12	–	6
Winky Wright (USA)	–	–	8
Javier Castillejo (SPA)	–	12	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	C	–	–
James Page (USA)	–	C	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	–	C
Derrell Coley (USA)	1	5	5
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	2	3	11
Ike Quartey (GHA)	3	9	–
Oba Carr (USA)	4	1	8
Vernon Forrest (USA)	5	12	4
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	6	–	–
Maxim Nesterenko (RUS)	7	7	–
Jose Luis Lopez (MEX)	8	–	–
Daniel Santos (PR)	9	–	12
Marco A. Lizarraga (MEX)	10	–	–
Frank Olsen (DEN)	12	2	–
Andrew Lewis (GUY)	19	4	–
Sergio Acuna (ARG)	–	6	–
Andrei Pestraiev (RUS)	–	8	–
Michael Trabant (GERE)	26	10	–
Vincent Pettway (USA)	–	–	1
Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	2
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	3
Mahenge Zulu (ZAI)	–	–	6
Sam Garr (GA)	–	–	7
Antonio Marqurito (MEX)	–	–	9
Michael Covington (USA)	–	–	10

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Vacant	C	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	–	C	–
Vince Phillips (USA)	10	–	C
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	1	6	–
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	2	11	–
Reggie Green (USA)	3	4	4
Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)	4	–	–
Yobelis Hurtado (CUB)	5	–	–
Okay Urkal (TUR)	6	–	–
Jongkil Kim (KOR)	7	–	–
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	8	2	–
Terrance Cauthen (USA)	9	–	–
Virgil McClendon (USA)	–	1	5
Elio Ortiz (VEN)	–	3	12
Fred Pendleton (USA)	23	5	9
Juan Coggi (ARG)	–	7	11
Junichi Ono (JAP)	–	8	–
Lonnie Smith (USA)	–	9	–
Hector Camacho Jr (PR)	–	10	–
Tarron Millett (USA)	–	–	1
Zab Judah (USA)	–	–	2
Randall Bailey (USA)	–	–	3
Emanuel Burton (USA)	18	–	6
Alex Carillo (COL)	–	–	7
Hector Lopez (MEX)	–	–	8
Luis Flores (COL)	–	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Steve Johnston (USA)	C	–	7
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	–	C	–
Shane Mosley (USA)	–	–	C
Billy Schwer (GB)	1	8	12
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	2	–	–
Chonnai Sithkodam (THAI)	3	–	–
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	4	–	–
Israel Cardona (USA)	5	4	1
Aldo Rios (ARG)	6	9	–
Lovemore Ndou (SA)	7	–	9
Tang Soo Choi (KOR)	8	–	–
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	9	10	–
Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Yanubek Nazarov (JAP)	–	2	–
Bill Martinez (USA)	–	3	10
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	–	5	–
Phillip Holiday (SA)	–	6	3
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	27	7	–
Don Robinson (USA)	15	12	2
Eduardo Morales (ARG)	–	–	4
Ben Tackie (GHA)	20	–	5
Luis Villalata (PERU)	–	–	6
Sandro Casamonica (ITA)	16	–	8

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Floyd Mayweather (USA)	C	–	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	–	C	–
Robert Garcia (USA)	–	–	C
Jesus Chavez (USA)	1	–	–
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	2	–	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	3	–	2
Seimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	4	–	–
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	5	–	3
Jorge Barrios (ARG)	6	–	–
Kango Nagashima (JAP)	7	9	–
Carlos Gerena (PR)	8	8	10
Dennis Holbaek (DEN)	9	4	–
Tiger Ari (PHIL)	10	–	–
Saiva Sim (MON)	–	1	–
Justin Juuko (UGA)	17	2	5
Tong Soo Choi (KOR)	–	3	–
Edson Xuxa Nacimento (BRA)	–	5	–
Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)	–	6	–
Antonio Hernandez (MEX)	–	7	–
Genaro Rios (NIC)	–	10	–
Diego Corrales (USA)	13	–	1
Arnulfo Castillo (USA)	–	–	4
Ramon Ledon (CUBA)	–	–	6
Moises Pedroza (COL)	–	–	7
Jaime Rangel (COL)	–	–	8
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	–	–	9

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	C	–	–
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	–	C	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	–	–	C
Cesar Soto (MEX)	1	1	10
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	2	12	–
Takeo Imaoka (JAP)	3	–	–
Byun Chi (KOR)	4	–	–
Cristiane Nabaloun (BKF)	5	–	–
Pablo Chacon (ARG)	6	7	–
Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)	7	–	–
Carlos Rios (ARG)	8	–	–
Edgar Barcenas (MEX)	9	–	–
Hector Valaquez (MEX)	10	–	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	2	–
Frederic Perez (FRA)	29	3	–
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	4	3
Paul Ingle (GB)	–	5	4
Angel Vasquez (PR)	–	6	2
Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)	–	8	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	–	9	–
Eddie Saenz (NIC)	–	10	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	–	1
Jesus Chavez (USA)	–	–	5
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	6
Steve Robinson (GB)	–	–	7
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	14	–	8
Bradford Beasley (USA)	21	–	9

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Erik Morales (MEX)	C	–	–
Nestor Garza (MEX)	–	C	–
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	–	–	C
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	1	11	–
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	2	–	–
Guty Espadas (MEX)	3	8	–
Michael Brodie (GB)	4	6	4
Ariston Clayton (USA)	5	–	6
Jesus Salud (USA)	6	–	–
Kozo Ishii (JAP)	7	–	–
Sergei Devakov (UKR)	8	–	11
Willie Jorrin (USA)	9	–	–
Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)	10	–	2
John Johnson (USA)	–	1	3
Yobert Ortega (VEN)	30	2	–
Richard Carrillo (VEN)	–	3	–
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	16	4	–
Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)	–	5	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	7	–
Serge Poilblan (FRA)	–	9	–
Choe Chol Su (KOR)	–	10	–
Victor Llerena (COL)	–	–	1
Danny Romero (USA)	–	–	5
Salim Medjkoune (FRA)	12	–	7
Jason Pires (USA)	–	–	8
Ernesto Gray (COL)	–	–	9
Anell Barotillo (AUSTRL)	26	–	10

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)	C	–	–
Johnny Tapia (USA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Adan Vargas (MEX)	1	5	5
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	2	–	–
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	3	–	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	4	3	–
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	5	8	–
John Michael Johnson (USA)	6	–	–
Hugo Dianzo (MEX)	7	–	–
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	8	–	–
Jess Maca (PHIL)	9	–	–
Saul Briceno (MEX)	10	–	–
Sahoiu Sithchai Condo (THAI)	–	1	–
Lukhin CP Gym (THAI)	–	2	–
Nana Konadu (GHA)	12	4	2
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	20	6	–
Jose Luis Valbuena (VEN)	–	7	–
Kozo Ishii (KOR)	–	9	–
Giovanni Andrade (BRA)	–	10	–
Jose Mendoza (COL)	–	–	1
Jesus Perez (COL)	26	–	3
Adrian Kaspari (INDO)	–	–	4
Albert Resilay (INDO)	–	–	6
Bernardo Mendoza (CHI)	–	–	7
Cesar Singo (ECU)	–	–	8
Juan Sanchez (COL)	–	–	9
Francisco Espita (USA)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
In Joo Cho (KOR)	C	–	–
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	–	C	–
Vacant	–	–	C
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	1	–	12
Luis Bolanos (COL)	2	–	–
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	3	9	–
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	4	8	2
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	5	–	–
Pone Saengmorokot (THAI)	6	–	–
Akihigo Nago (JAP)	7	7	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	8	1	–
Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)	9	–	–
Ricardo Barajas (MEX)	10	–	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	–
Satoshi Iida (JAP)	–	3	–
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	–	4	7
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	5	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	6	11
Evangelo Perez (PAN)	–	10	9
Mark Johnson (USA)	–	–	1
Eric Morel (USA)	14	–	3
Pedro Pena (USA)	21	–	4
Ernesto Briceno (VEN)	–	–	5
Libaniel Alvarez (COL)	–	–	6
Ubadel Soto (COL)	–	–	8
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	–	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Manny Pacquiao (PHIL)	C	–	–
Hugo Soto (ARG)	–	C	–
Vacant	–	–	C
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	1	–	–
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	2	–	–
David Guerault (FRA)	3	5	1
Alex Ali Baba (GHA)	4	–	–
Oscar Arciniega (MEX)	5	–	–
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	6	7	–
Mike Trejo (USA)	7	8	7
Damaen Kelly (IRE)	8	–	–
Isidro Garcia (USA)	9	–	–
Chokchai Chokviwat (THAI)	10	–	–
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	1	–
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	–	2	–
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	3	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	4	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	–	6	–
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	9	–
Setsuo Kobayashi (JAP)	–	10	–
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	2
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	3
Yodchingchai Sornthong (THAI)	–	–	4
Yuri Arbachakov (RUS)	–	–	5
Manuel Herrera (USA)	–	–	6
Pedro Alcazar (PAN)	–	–	8
Luis Cox (PER)	–	–	9
Angel Priolo (COL)	–	–	10

JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	C	–	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	C	–
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	–	C
Yosam Choi (KOR)	1	7	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	2	2	2
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	3	–	–
Phanieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	4	–	–
Edgar Cardenas (MEX)	5	–	–
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	6	5	–
Gabriel Munoz (MEX)	7	–	–
Ladislao Vazquez (MEX)	8	–	–
Oscar Andrade (MEX)	9	4	11
Bebis Mendoza (COL)	10	–	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	–	1	1
Medngon 3K Battery (THAI)	11	3	12
Panieng Pontarat (THAI)	–	6	–
Pongsaklek Nakornton (THAI)	–	8	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	20	9	10
Jake Matlala (SA)	16	10	–
Pedro Rodriguez (COL)	–	–	3
Gill Ikeda (JAP)	–	–	4
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	5
Ratanapol Sor Vorapin (THAI)	–	–	6
Asdrubal Velasquez (COL)	–	–	7
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	–	8
Manuel Jesus Herrera (DR)	17	–	9

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	C	C	–
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	C
Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)	1	9	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	2	–	2
Daniel Reyes (COL)	3	12	3
Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)	4	–	–
Luis Lazarte (ARG)	5	–	1
Satoru Abe (JAP)	6	3	–
Jun Arlos (PHIL)	7	–	–
Chartchai Nokornton-Parkview (THAI)	8	–	–
Erdene Chuluun (MON)	9	–	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Rocky Lin (JAP)	–	2	–
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	4	6
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	5	–
Noel Arumbulet (VEN)	–	6	–
Ronnie Magramo (PHIL)	–	7	–
Randy Mangubat (PHIL)	–	8	–
Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)	29	10	–
Eric Jamili (PHIL)	–	–	4
Mickey Cantwell (GB)	–	–	5
Faisol Akbar (INDO)	–	–	7
Rocky Palma (JAP)	–	–	8
Jose Laureano (PR)	–	–	9
Mongol Chareon (THAI)	–	–	10

RING CLASSIC

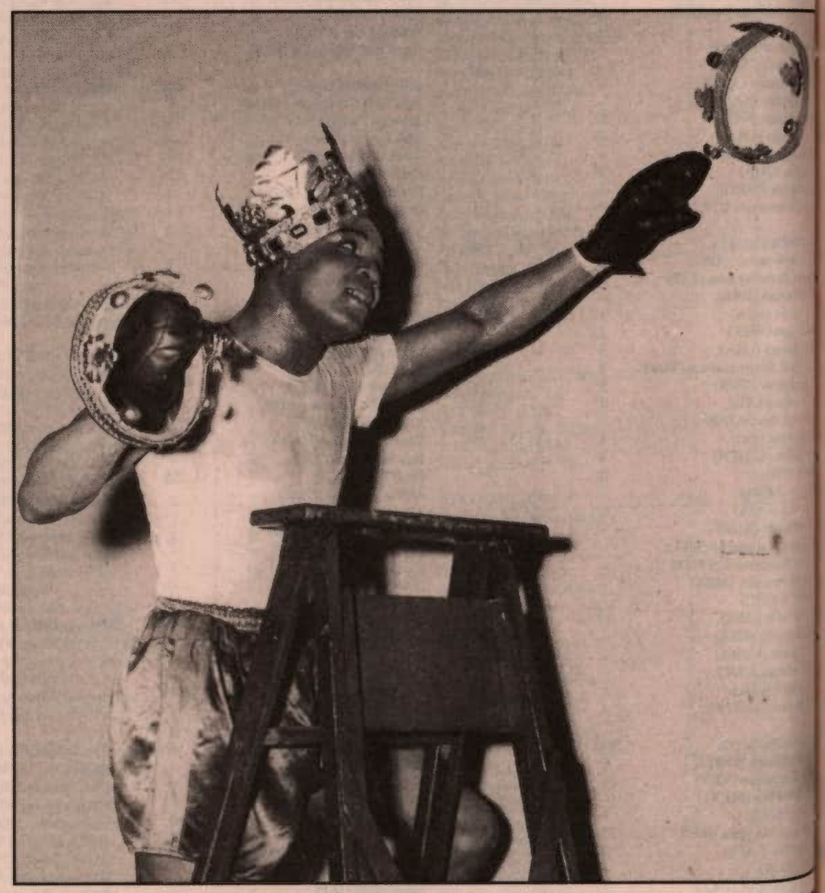
TRIPLE TRIPL

Separating Fact From Fiction

By Nigel Collins

Much of the hype surrounding the proposed bout between Thomas Hearns and Juan Domingo Roldan for the vacant WBC middleweight title has focused on what is being billed as Hearns' attempt to win an "unprecedented fourth world championship." Sounds good in a press release or TV promo. Of course those press releases and TV promos would be spouting the same dribble if Hearns was going for the IBF super middleweight "world championship."

To THE RING and all who honor boxing tradition, Hearns has never been even a one-time world champion in the true sense of the term. To the purist, Hearns is merely



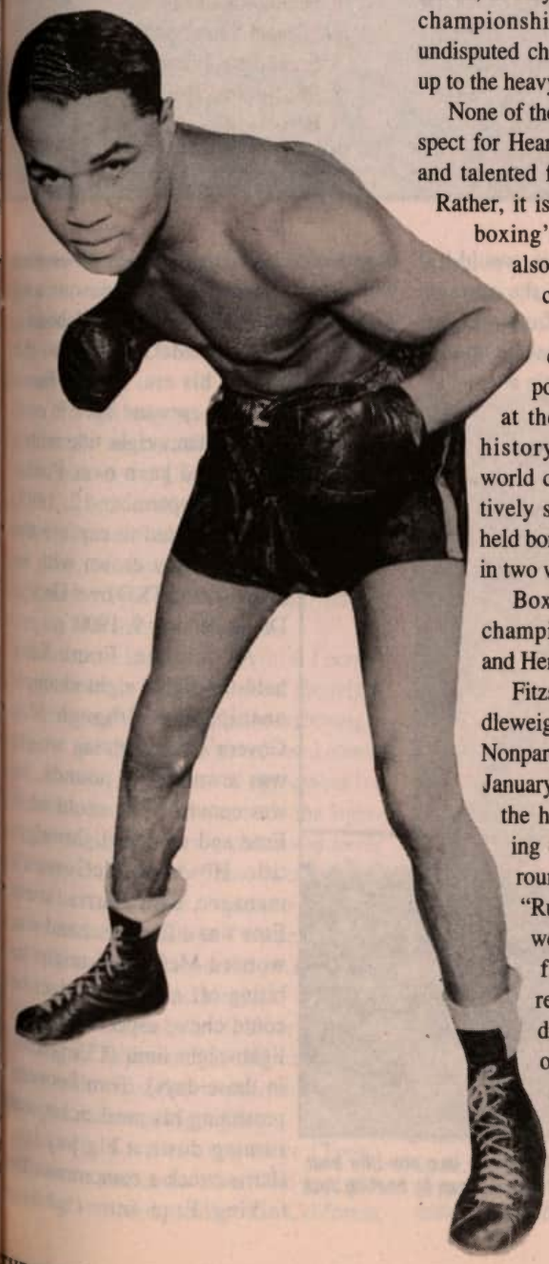
Henry Armstrong, along with Bob Fitzsimmons, was a true triple champion. Considered perhaps the greatest pound-for-pound champion ever, Armstrong was unique for holding three world titles simultaneously: the featherweight, welterweight, and lightweight belts.

From THE RING, November 1987

TRIPLE CHAMPIONS

a three-time "titleholder" going for his fourth "title."

As regular readers know, THE RING recognizes only the eight traditional weight divisions. Therefore, one of Hearns' titles (the WBC super welterweight crown) is automatically disqualified. Hearns' other two belts, the WBA welterweight and WBC light heavyweight titles, were just



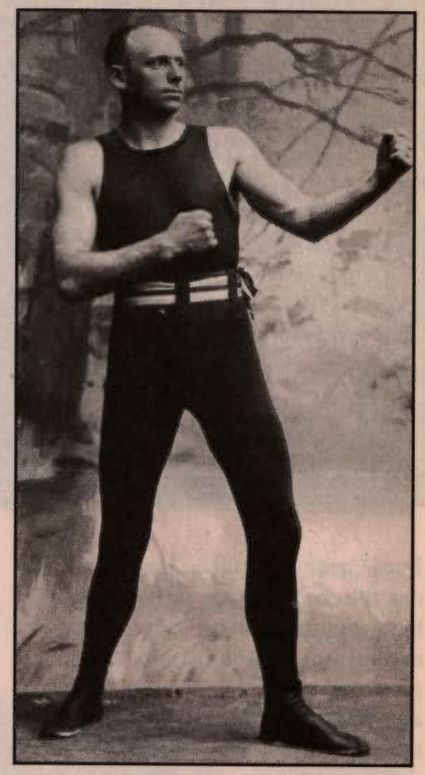
portions of those championships. In fact, when "The Hit Man" faced Sugar Ray Leonard for the whole welterweight ball of wax in September of 1981, he lost not only the fight, but his partial claim to the 147-pound championship.

Hearns' WBC light heavyweight title, which he would have to vacate in order to fight for the organization's 160-pound crown, is only one-third of the 175-pound championship that became split when undisputed champ Michael Spinks moved up to the heavyweight class.

None of the above is noted out of disrespect for Hearns, one of the most popular and talented fighters of the past decade. Rather, it is a further attempt to define boxing's genuine champions. It is also an effort to restore proper credit to those handful of boxers who were true multi-champions. With this last point in mind, let's take a look at the only two men in boxing history to win three legitimate world championships and the relatively small band of warriors who held bona fide world championships in two weight divisions.

Boxing's only authentic triple champions are Bob Fitzsimmons and Henry Armstrong. Period!

Fitzsimmons first held the middleweight belt, stopping Jack "The Nonpareil" Dempsey in 13 rounds, January 14, 1891. Next, he annexed the heavyweight title by knocking out Jim Corbett in the 11th round, March 17, 1897. When "Ruby Robert" lost the heavyweight title to Jim Jeffries the following year, and lost a rematch in 1902, he simply dropped down a division and outpointed George Gardner over 20 rounds for the light heavyweight championship, November 25, 1903. This was hardly a big problem for Fitz-



Fitzsimmons was able to hold three different titles because he never weighed much more than 175 pounds. He won the middleweight title, jumped up to heavyweight and beat defending champ Jim Corbett, then dropped back down to win the light heavy title.

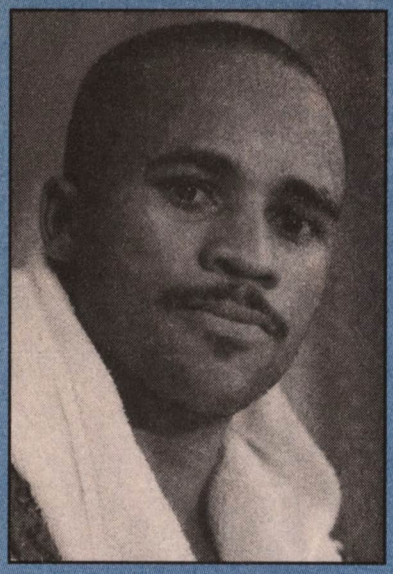
simmons, as he never weighed much more than 175 pounds in the first place.

It was not until August 17, 1938, when Armstrong, already holder of the featherweight and welterweight belts, decisioned Lou Ambers for the lightweight title, that boxing had its second, and to date last, triple champ.

Of course, what made Armstrong's feat so unique is the fact that for a brief spell he held all three titles simultaneously. "Homicide Hank" first won the featherweight title by stopping Petey Sarron, October 29, 1937. Next came the welterweight crown when he outpointed Barney Ross over 15 rounds, May 31, 1938, followed by the aforementioned victory over Ambers.

Unfortunately, because the "Alphabet

THE RING RATINGS, November 1987



Lloyd Honeyghan

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: MICHAEL SPINKS, St. Louis, MO
1. **Mike Tyson**, Catskill, NY
2. **Evander Holyfield**, Atlanta, GA
3. **Tony Tucker**, Grand Rapids, MI
4. **James Smith**, Magnolia, NC
5. **Pinklon Thomas**, Pontiac, MI
6. **Tim Witherspoon**, Philadelphia, PA
7. **Tyrell Biggs**, Philadelphia, PA
8. **Trevor Berbick**, Florida
9. **Carl Williams**, New York, NY
10. **Jose Ribalta**, Miami, FL

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: VACANT
1. **Bobby Czyz**, Wanaque, NJ
2. **Leslie Stewart**, Trinidad
3. **Thomas Hearns**, Detroit, MI
4. **Marvin Johnson**, Indianapolis, IN
5. **Dennis Andries**, England
6. **Virgil Hill**, Grand Forks, ND
7. **Ramzi Hassan**, Campo, CA
8. **Eddie Davis**, Freeport, NY
9. **Chong-Pal Park**, Korea
10. **Lindell Holmes**, Detroit, MI

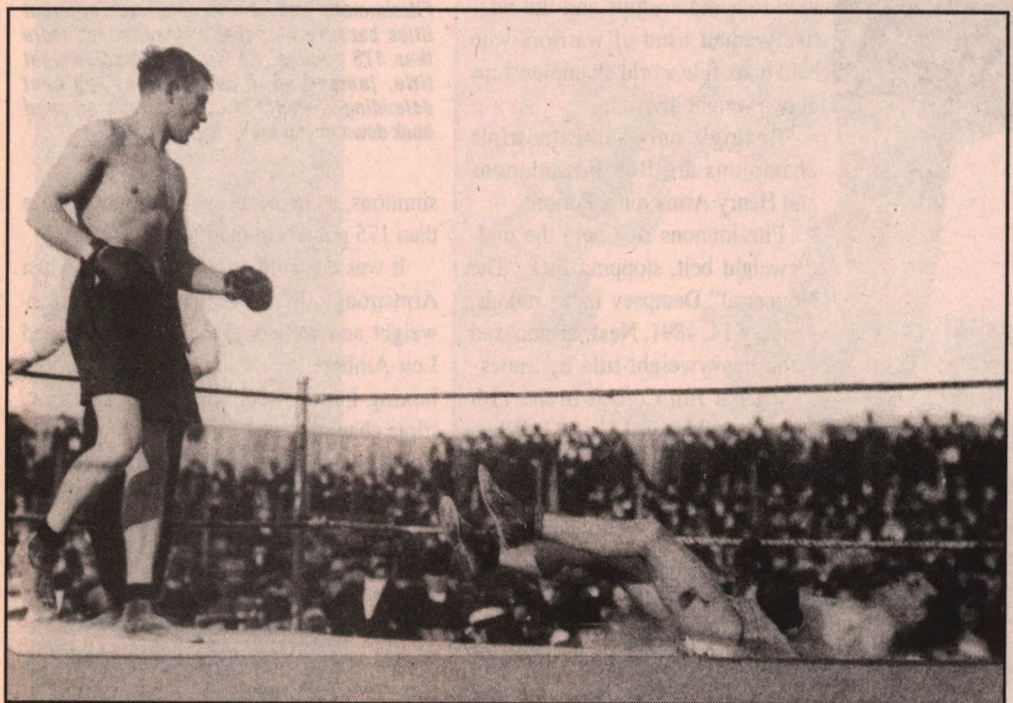
MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: VACANT
1. **Marvin Hagler**, Brockton, MA
2. **Michael Olajide**, Canada
3. **Mike McCallum**, Jamaica
4. **Iran Barkley**, New York, NY
5. **Sumbu Kalambay**, Italy
6. **Michael Nunn**, Sherman Oaks, CA
7. **Frank Tate**, Houston, TX
8. **Robbie Sims**, Brockton, MA
9. **Herol Graham**, England
10. **Juan Roldan**, Argentina

Boys" insist their titleholders relinquish one title before going for another, it is highly unlikely another boxer will ever duplicate Armstrong's mind-boggling accomplishment. More the pity. Allowing a champion to hold more than one title at a time, providing he is prepared to defend all of his belts on a regular basis, would be much more interesting than the current trend of boxers bouncing from weight class to weight class to grab as many phony titles as possible in a vain attempt at immortality.

Before discussing boxing's double champions, let's examine two other m who came closest to Fitzsimmons a Armstrong in their bid for triple titlehood

"Terrible" Terry McGovern was t Roberto Duran of his era, a baby-fac killer with fire in his eyes and TNT in ea fist. He won the bantamweight title with first-round kayo over Pedl Palmer, September 12, 189 and proceeded to capture t featherweight crown with eighth-round TKO over Geor Dixon, January 9, 1900.

At the time, Frank Er held the lightweight champ onship, and although M Govern's best fighting weig was around 122 pounds, h was convinced he could wh Erne and win the lightweig title. However, McGovern manager, Sam Harris, kne Erne was a fine boxer and w worried McGovern might b biting off a bit more than h could chew, especially at t lightweight limit (133 poun in those days). Torn betwe protecting his meal ticket a turning down a big payda Harris struck a compromise b talking Erne into fightin



Stanley Ketchel had a decent claim to winning three world titles. He beat the welter champ in a non-title bout, won the middleweight title from Jack Sullivan (pictured), then laid claim to the light heavy crown by beating Jack O'Brien. The title, however, had fallen into disuse by the time Ketchel met O'Brien.

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **LLOYD HONEYGHAN**, England
1. **Mark Breland**, Brooklyn, NY
2. **Marlon Starling**, Hartford, CT
3. **Maurice Blocker**, Washington, D.C.
4. **Simon Brown**, Washington, D.C.
5. **Rollin Williams**, Phoenix, AZ
6. **Juan Martin Coggi**, Argentina
7. **Tyrone Trice**, Detroit, MI
8. **Rene Arredondo**, Mexico
9. **Terry Marsh**, England
10. **Frankie Warren**, Corpus Christi, TX

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: VACANT
1. **Hector Camacho**, New York, NY
2. **Edwin Rosario**, Puerto Rico
3. **Julio Cesar Chavez**, Mexico
4. **Vinny Pazienza**, Cranston, RI
5. **Pernell Whitaker**, Norfolk, VA
6. **Jose Luis Ramirez**, Mexico
7. **Meldrick Taylor**, Philadelphia, PA
8. **Frankie Randall**, Morristown, TN
9. **Greg Haugen**, Auburn, WA
10. **Amancio Castro**, Colombia

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **ANTONIO ESPARRAGOZA**, Venezuela
1. **Azumah Nelson**, Ghana
2. **Steve Cruz**, Fort Worth, TX
3. **Calvin Grove**, Coatesville, PA
4. **Jeff Fenech**, Australia
5. **Louie Espinosa**, Phoenix, AZ
6. **Barry McGuigan**, Ireland
7. **Victor Callejas**, Puerto Rico
8. **Marcos Villasana**, Mexico
9. **Hector Lopez**, Glendale, CA
10. **Antonio Rivera**, Puerto Rico

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: VACANT
1. **Miguel Lora**, Colombia
2. **Khaosai Galaxy**, Thailand
3. **Santos Laciar**, Argentina
4. **Gaby Canizales**, Laredo, TX
5. **Kelvin Seabrooks**, Charlotte, NC
6. **Gilberto Roman**, Mexico
7. **Chang-Young Park**, Korea
8. **Frankie Duarte**, Venice, CA
9. **Albert Davila**, Pomona, CA
10. **Greg Richardson**, Youngstown, OH

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: **SOT CHITALADA**, Thailand
1. **Jung-Koo Chang**, Korea
2. **Fidel Bassa**, Colombia
3. **Myung-Woo Yuh**, Korea
4. **Hilario Zapata**, Panama
5. **Dodie Penalosa**, Philippines
6. **Gabriel Bernal**, Mexico
7. **Rodolfo Blanco**, Colombia
8. **Rae-Ki Ahn**, Korea
9. **Paul Gonzalez**, Los Angeles, CA
10. **Benedicto Murillo**, Panama

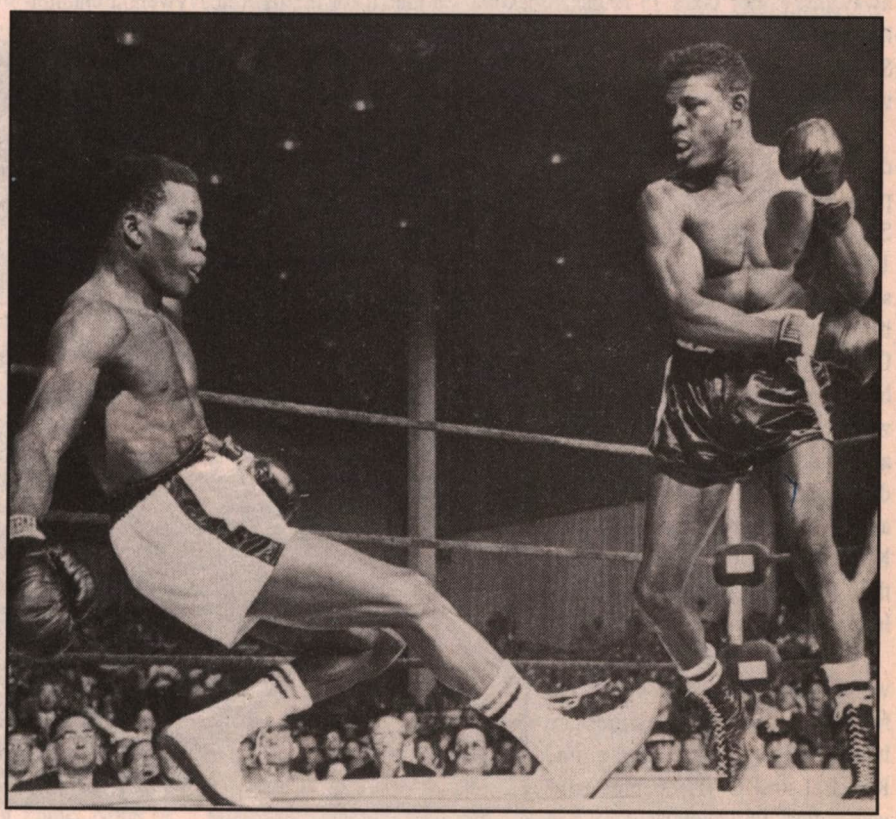
McGovern at 128 pounds. Why Erne agreed to such a deal is hard to say, but agree he did, and he faced McGovern July 16, 1900, in New York City's old Madison Square Garden.

In the opening moments of the bout, Erne caught the onrushing McGovern with a left hook to the chin, dropping McGovern for a count of nine. It proved to be the severely weight-drained Erne's first and last gasp. McGovern quickly recovered and handed Erne a nasty beating, finally stopping him in the third round.

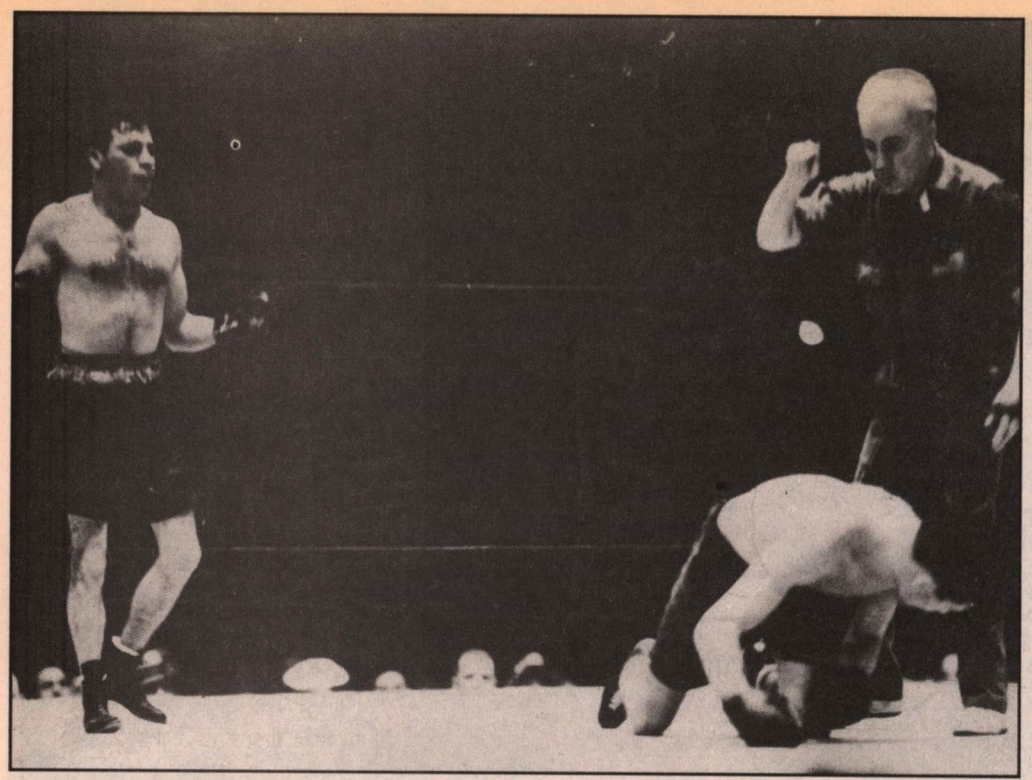
Some, including "Terrible Terry," thought because McGovern beat the reigning lightweight ruler within the lightweight limit, he should have been crowned champion. But as the articles of agreement for the match stated it was not for the lightweight title, McGovern's claim was never seriously considered. Thus, McGovern's bid for boxing's triple crown was lost on a contractual technicality. Two years later, the lightweight title passed to Joe Gans when he iced Erne in one round.

Stanley Ketchel, the legendary "Michigan Assassin," is the only other fighter with a half-decent claim to three of boxing's traditional eight titles.

In 1908, Ketchel axed Mike (Twin) Sullivan in one round. Sullivan was the holder of something called the California World Welterweight Title, and it was this title that was on the line when he met Ketchel, hence Ketchel's claim to the welterweight crown. Sullivan had won this so-called title by outpointing Honey Mellody over 20 rounds. Besides the California version of the title, Mellody also held the genuine world title, but that was not up for



Emile Griffith, shown knocking out Benny Paret for his first world welterweight title in Miami Beach in 1961, was another triple claimant. Griffith claimed the European Boxing Union junior middleweight title in 1962, a dubious title that was not widely recognized.



When Tony Canzoneri, the feather and lightweight champ, knocked out Jack "Kid" Berg in the third round in 1931 in Chicago, he was fighting to retain his lightweight title and take Berg's junior welterweight title.

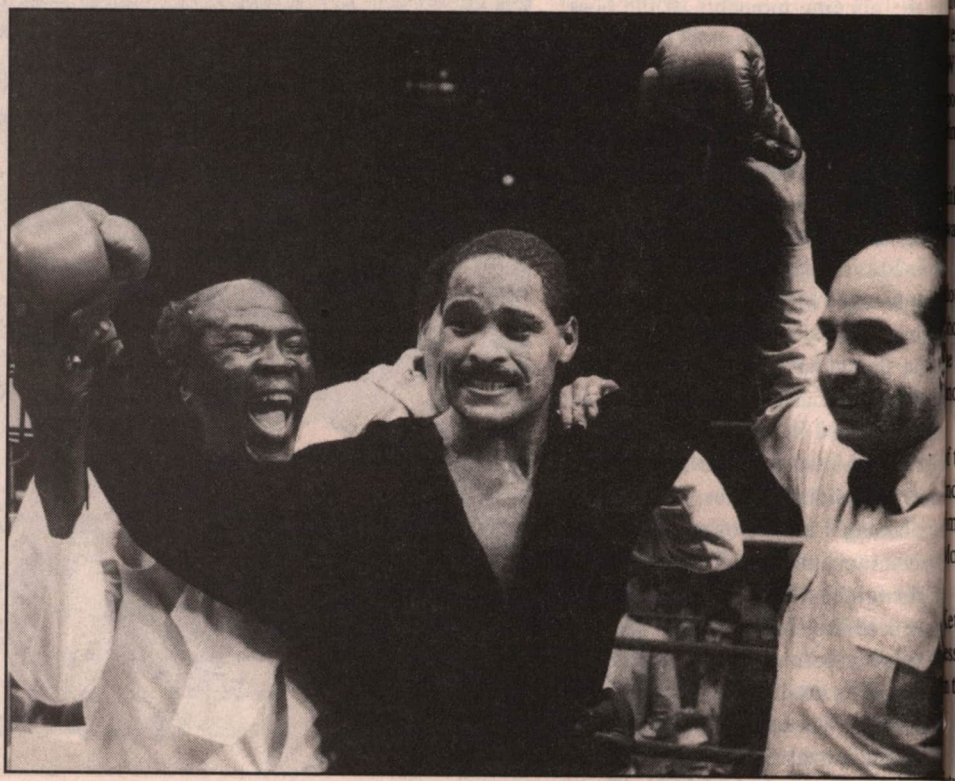
grabs when Sullivan beat him. Therefore, Mellody managed to hold onto the "real championship" until Frank Mandell took away that honor via a 15-round knockout five months after Mellody's loss to Sullivan. And you thought things were confusing today.

Ketchel went on to win the middleweight championship by stopping Mike's brother, Jack (Twin) Sullivan, in 20 rounds, May 9, 1908, but that's not the end of the story. The next year, he fought two bouts with Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, then holder of the light heavyweight title. The first fight was a 10-round no-decision affair, and according to all accounts a dandy scrap. The pair was matched again a few months later, and Ketchel stopped O'Brien in the third round. So why wasn't he light heavyweight champion?

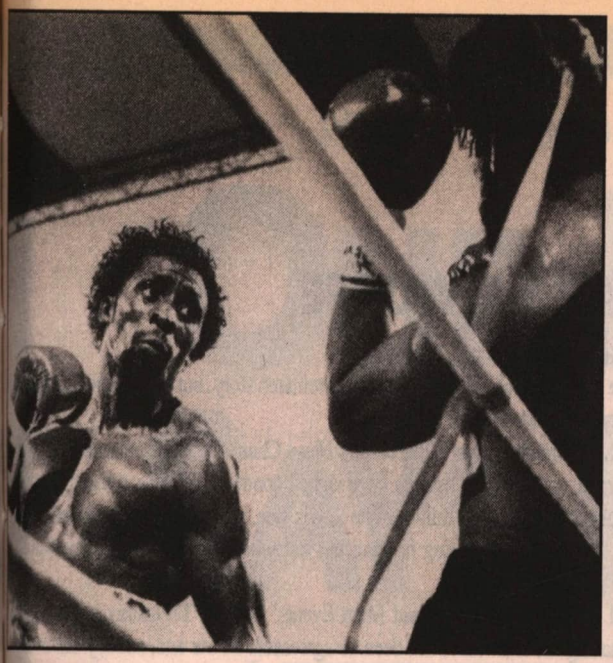
It seems that the light heavyweight title wasn't considered too hot of a property at the time and had fallen into disuse by the time Ketchel and O'Brien met four years after "Philadelphia Jack" had beaten Fitzsimmons. In fact, O'Brien never defended the 175-pound belt, though he twice challenged Tommy Burns, unsuccessfully, for the heavyweight title. As it was, there was not a match for the light heavyweight championship of the world after th O'Brien-Fitzsimmons bo until Jack Dillon outpointe Battling Levinsky for th vacant title, April 14, 1914.

Other triple title claiman are Tony Canzoneri, Barne Ross, Emile Griffith, Wilfre Benitez, Alexis Arguello, an Roberto Duran. All marvelou fighters, but none a valid tripl champion.

Canzoneri decisioned John ny Dundee over 15 rounds t win the world featherweigh title, October 24, 1927, an won the lightweight title b flattening Al Singer in the fir round, November 14, 1930 When Canzoneri kayoe Jackie "Kid" Berg in Chicag April 24, 1931, both Tony' lightweight and Berg's junio welterweight titles were a stake. However, as the title h won from Berg was of th junior variety, Canzoneri will have to b satisfied with being recognized as a doubl champion and a member of THE RING Boxing Hall of Fame.



The only bona fide world title Wilfred Benitez (shown with fellow triple title claimant Emile Griffith over his rig shoulder) won was the welterweight title over Carlos Palomino in 1979. He won portions of the junior mi dleweight and junior welter crowns as well, but those "junior" titles are not part of the traditional eight division



Thomas Hearns was not a true triple world champion. To boxing purists, Hearns was simply a three-time titlist, holding portions of the welterweight, light heavyweight, and junior middleweight titles.

Ross' case is similar and connected to Canzoneri's. He was both the welter (by outpointing Jimmy McLarnin over 15 rounds, May 28, 1934) and lightweight champion, but the junior welter belt he also earned when beating Canzoneri for the lightweight crown, June 23, 1933, was just that—a junior title.

Griffith, a three-time welterweight and two-time middleweight champion, won the vacant European Boxing Union version of the junior middleweight title by outpointing Ted Wright, October 17, 1962, in Vienna, becoming the first 154-pound champ in boxing history. Nevertheless, this dubious distinction is not enough to warrant calling him a triple champ.

Among Benitez' collection of belts, only the welterweight title, won by decisioning Carlos Palomino, January 14, 1979, was for one of the eight traditional championships.

While Arguello, on the other hand, can be justifiably called a double champ (featherweight and lightweight), he stops one short of the hat trick because the WBC super featherweight title he won by stopping Alfredo Escalera, January 28, 1978, is just another name for the "junior" lightweight title.

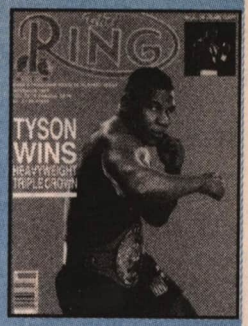
Duran, another double champion, is in the same boat as most of the so-called triple champions: While winning the lightweight and welterweight championships made him a legend in his own time, the junior middleweight crown he ripped from Davey Moore's head, June 16, 1983, was mere window dressing.

So what does it all mean? Does the fact that McGovern, Ketchel, Hearns, and the rest were not really triple champions lessen their greatness? Do their individual accomplishments pale in the revealing light of boxing tradition?

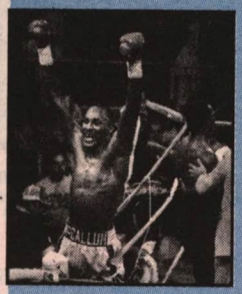
I would say not.

All of the champions discussed here are either current or future members of THE RING's Boxing Hall of Fame. None of them need any artificial titles to enhance their reputations. Their ferocious deeds speak for themselves. ■

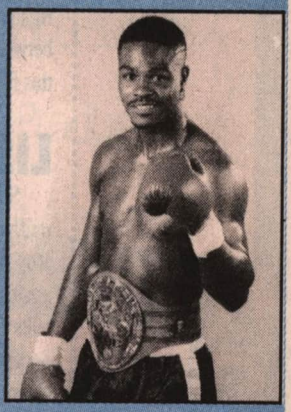
THE RING, November 1987



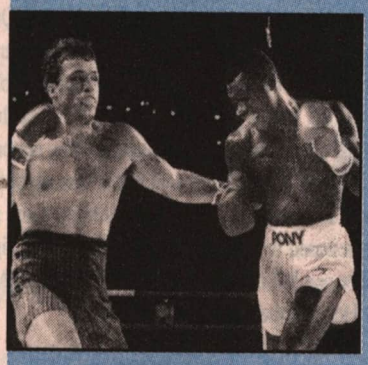
The Cover: Mike Tyson became the unified heavyweight champion of the world with a 12-round decision over Tony Tucker, yet THE RING disputed that claim, still placing linear champ Michael Spinks atop the heavyweight division. Don King, however, went all out to prove "Iron Mike" was the heavyweight king, dressing up Tyson in a $250,000 chinchilla royal robe.



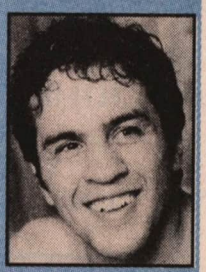
Curry Creamed: Mike McCallum rejoiced after smoking Donald Curry via fifth-round knockout, and in the process took a step toward facing Thomas Hearns, who would soon beat Juan Roldan for the WBC middleweight belt. McCallum crushed Curry with a ferocious left hook that short-circuited Curry's career.



Double Trouble: A pair of brothers, Orlin and Terry Norris, are featured in the "New Faces" section of THE RING. Terry was considered the better prospect because of his fluid style and ability to throw equally hard punches with either hand. Terry turned into a four-time junior middleweight champion and possible Hall of Famer, while Orlin became a cruiserweight champion.



Holiday Hilton: THE RING predicted a big future for Matthew Hilton, "The Pride Of Canada." Hilton captured the IBF junior middleweight title with a 15-round unanimous decision over Buster Drayton on June 27, 1987. He held the title for over a year, before Robert Hines beat him in November of '88.

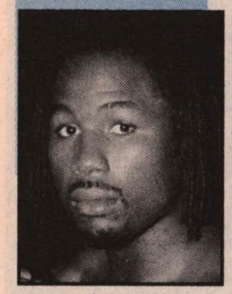


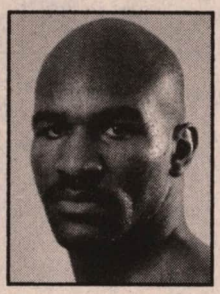
Comeback Bobby: Bobby Chacon survived three knockdowns to beat Martin "Chiva" Guevera with a third-round stoppage in a comeback bid. The former junior lightweight champion was battered by Guevera, an unknown, last-second substitute. The next day, Chacon re-retired.

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

A SEQUEL THAT CAN'T BE WORSE THAN THE ORIGINAL





Lewis-Holyfield: Rematch in the works

There are two sides to the Lennox Lewis-Evander Holyfield rematch story, but both sides are ultimately saying the same thing: They want and expect it to happen.

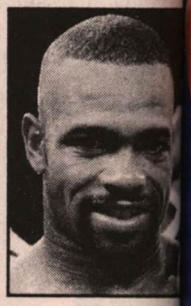
The Holyfield side, as told by promoter **Don King** on Fox News Channel a week after the outrageous draw at Madison Square Garden, says that the fighters have signed contracts for a September encounter guaranteeing both heavyweight champions $15-million. The Lewis side, as told by his American promotional outfit, **Main Events**, says King is spouting nothing but untruths, but still insists they want the rematch, probably in October or November.

"Everything you've read from King is false," said Main Events' **Donald Tremblay** in late-March. "They're not even close to making the deal. There has been no agreement on our end, nobody has even sat down to discuss it. There's no TV deal and no site deal. King's just trying to deflect attention from his decision."

Perhaps the hardest thing to believe about King's claims is that the same total purses as in the initial meeting, a combined $30 million, could possibly be guaranteed after the dreadful public reaction to their first fight. And coming up with dollar figures for the fighters may not even prove to be the toughest part of the negotiations; **Dino Duva** has insisted that there be promotional parity between Main Events, **Panix Promotions** of England, and King this time around. So while the rematch may well come together this fall (most likely in Las Vegas), don't believe that it's set until you hear *both* sides saying that's the case.

LISTEN UP

So the heavyweight title didn't get unified on March 13. There's no sense crying in our spit buckets forever, especially when unification fever still rages elsewhere. In the land of the light heavyweights, June 5 appears to be the date for WBA/WBC champ **Roy Jones** to meet IBF titlist **Reggie Johnson** on HBO ... After **Felix Trinidad** gets done with the mother of all mismatches against **Vincent Pettway** on May 29, we may see some unification in the welterweight division as well. According to Showtime, talks have begun regarding a match between IBF champ Trinidad and WBA king **James Page** for September ... Following the lead of Olympic teammate **Floyd Mayweather**, IBF junior middleweight champion **Fernando Vargas** is making it clear that he wants to defend against the best his weight class has to offer by calling out former welter champ **Ike Quartey**, who is rumored to be moving up to 154 pounds. When asked whether he was targeting Quartey as a response to **Oscar De La Hoya** barely pulling out a decision win over the Ghanaian, Vargas responded, "I think you hit the nail right on the head. Quartey's a tough fighter, and I feel kind of bad that De La Hoya doesn't want to give him another chance, so I'll give him a chance." Vargas has an HBO date in June or July, and talks were underway at press time to make "Bazooka" the opponent ... **Michael Grant's** next fight will be June 19 on HBO, and Main Events said that it was about 90 percent likely that the man in the other corner would be **Lou Savarese**. One other possibility being mentioned is **Shannon Briggs** ... **Derrell Coley**, who was released by Main Events last November, signed with **America Presents** in March. Coley is the number-one WBC welterweight contender, and America Presents has declared their intention to try to force his mandatory at De La Hoya by the end of the year.



Jones: Time to unify

FUTURE FIGHTS

By Art Manteris

VP/Director of Race and Sports Operations Las Vegas Hilton SuperBook

Las Vegas Hilton

Favorite	Underdog	Odds	The Skinny
Lennox Lewis	Evander Holyfield	2-1	Lewis wins again!
Fernando Vargas	Ike Quartey	Pick-'em	Vargas may be too big
David Reid	Guillermo Jones	5-1	Easy defense for Reid
Naseem Hamed	Vuyani Bungu	2½-1	As usual, Hamed fights smaller men
Michael Grant	Lou Savarese	6-1	No problem for Grant

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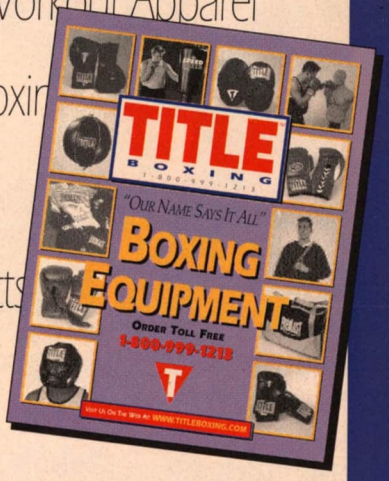

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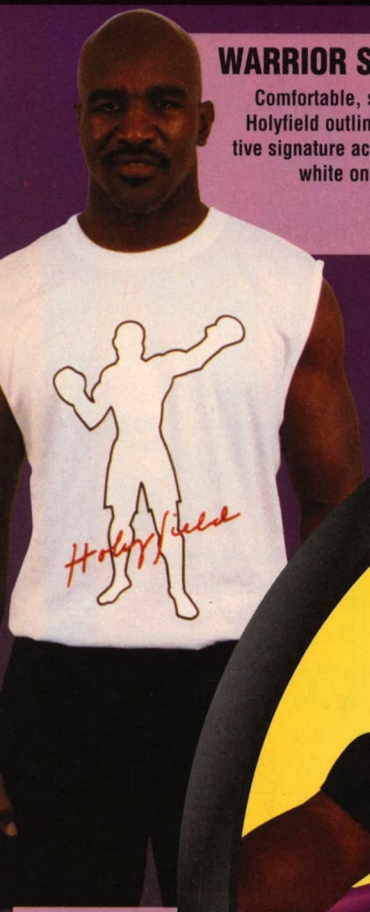

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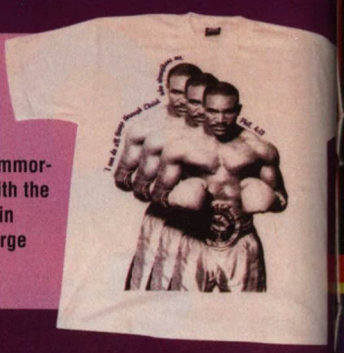

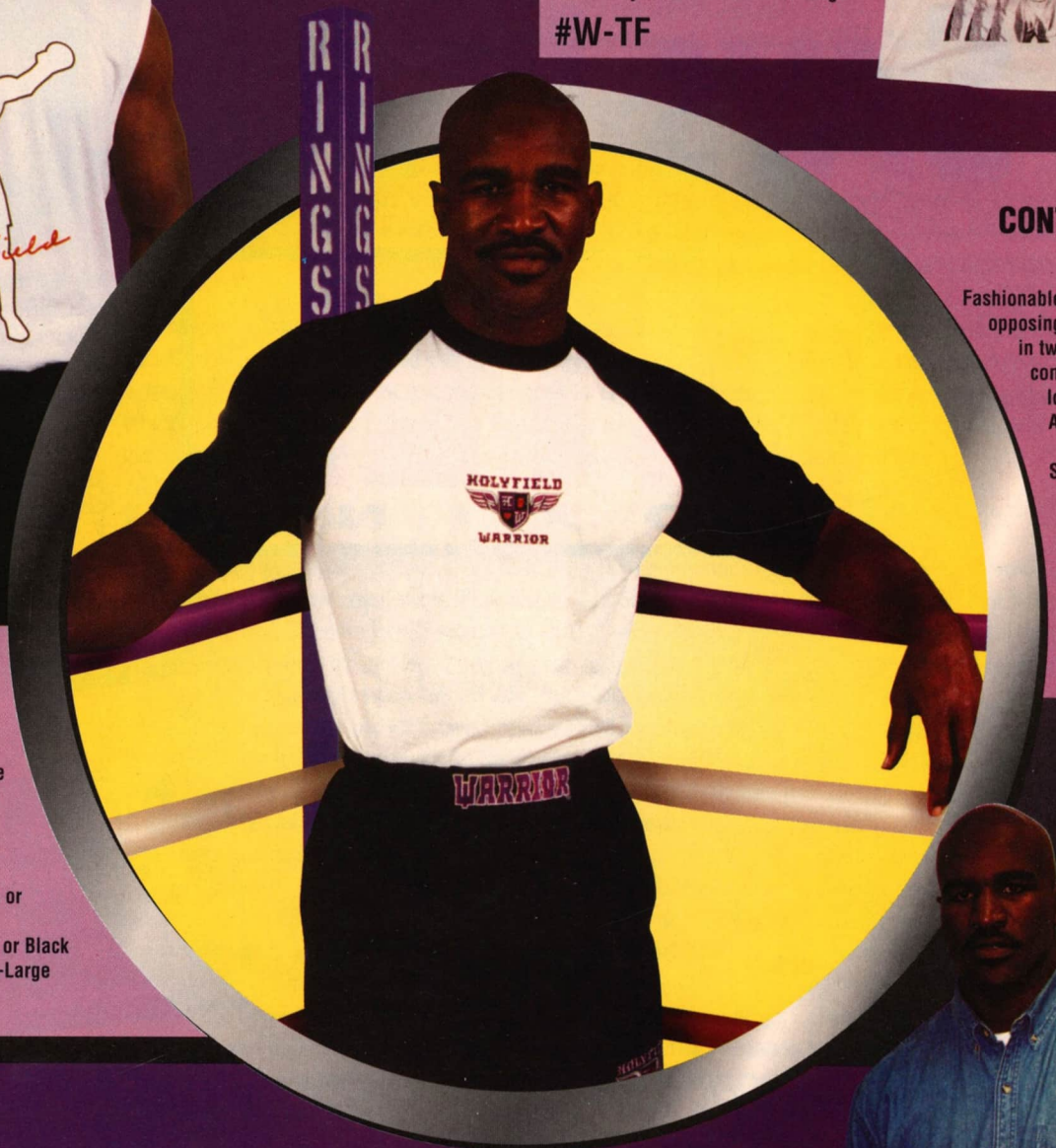

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